

THE RAPE  
OF A  
NOBLE IDEOLOGY

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*U.S.A. In Perspective 1783-1985*

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ASLAM MUNJEE





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FIRST AMENDMENT PUBLISHERS  
CALIFORNIA U.S.A.

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## Background and Introduction

"You have just taken an oath of allegiance to the United States. Of allegiance to whom? Of allegiance to no one, unless it be to God — certainly not of allegiance to those who temporarily represent this great government. You have taken an oath of allegiance to a great deal, to a great body of principles, to a great hope of the human race ... And while you bring all countries with you, you come with a purpose of leaving all other countries behind you — bringing what is best in their spirit, but not looking over your shoulders and seeking to perpetuate what you intend to leave behind in them... You cannot become thorough Americans if you think of yourselves in groups. A man who thinks of himself as belonging to a particular national group in America has not yet become an American...

"My urgent advice to you would be, not only always to think first of America, but always, also, to think first of humanity. You do not love humanity if you seek to divide humanity into jealous camps. Humanity can be welded together only by love, by sympathy, by justice, not by jealousy and hatred. I am sorry for the man who seeks to make personal capital out of the passions of his fellow-men. He has lost the touch and ideal of America. For America was created to unite mankind ... if some of us have forgotten what America believed in, you, at any rate, imported in your hearts a renewal of the belief. That is the reason that I, for one, make you welcome. If I have in any degree forgotten what America was intended for, I will thank God if you will remind me. I was born in America. You dreamed dreams of what America was to be, and I hope you brought the dreams with you. No man who does not see visions will ever realize any high hope or undertake any high enterprise. Just because you brought dreams with you, America is more likely to realize dreams such as you brought. You are enriching us if you come expecting us to be better than we are..."

President Woodrow Wilson

"To American Citizens Of Foreign Birth" 1915

\* The United States's real Bicentennial was in fact not until 1981. In 1776, America started its fight for independence. The Treaty of Paris in 1783 gave that independence. The first President of the nation died 1789.

"You have just taken an oath of allegiance to the United States. Of allegiance to whom? Of allegiance to no one, unless it be to God — certainly not of allegiance to those who temporarily represent this great government. You have taken an oath of allegiance to a great deal, to a great body of principles, to a great hope of the human race. . . . And while you bring all countries with you, you come with a purpose of leaving all other countries behind you — bringing what is best in their spirit, but not looking over your shoulders and seeking to perpetrate what you intend to leave behind in them. . . . You cannot become thorough Americans if you think of yourselves in groups. A man who thinks of himself as belonging to a particular national group in America has not yet become an American. . . ."

"My urgent advice to you would be, not only always to think first of America, but always, also, to think first of humanity. You do not love humanity if you seek to divide humanity into jealous camps. Humanity can be welded together only by love, by sympathy, by justice, not by jealousy and hatred. I am sorry for the man who seeks to make personal capital out of the passions of his fellow-men. He has lost the touch and ideal of America. For America was created to unite mankind. . . . if some of us have forgotten what America believed in, you, at any rate, imported in your hearts a renewal of the belief. That is the reason that I, for one, make you welcome. If I have in any degree forgotten what America was intended for, I will thank God if you will remind me. I was born in America. You dreamed dreams of what America was to be, and I hope you brought the dreams with you. No man who does not see visions will ever realize any high hope or undertake any high enterprise. Just because you brought dreams with you, America is more likely to realize dreams such as you brought. You are enriching us if you come expecting us to be better than we are. . . ."

President Woodrow Wilson  
 "To American Citizens Of Foreign Birth," 1912



## *Background and Introduction*

This book was intended for publication soon after the 1976 Bicentennial celebrations\*. I had completed the draft, ending with the real dangers facing the U.S. after Watergate was over, when the Power Cartel had already commenced its offensive through media to turn the nation "conservative".

But then hell and damnation became my lot for several years. While this period killed something in me, it also provided fresh determination to dig deeper into issues which — I now feel — I had merely looked at peripherally. One solace was that the Carter years provided enormous new data to support my thesis — a mixed blessing, of course, as I believe that the injustices heaped upon Jimmy Carter will one day be recognized as one of the tragic turning points in American history. What I had predicted did happen, but that provides no balm.

The desire to present the viewpoint which is the core of the present thesis has been strong in me from my first year in the U.S., over twenty two years ago. Those first few years were to provide deeper understanding and more data — working as I did for major corporations — and eradicated the vestiges of the naivete that is perhaps inescapable anywhere in the world for those with Western leanings, subject as they are to the lethal power of U.S. media.

For the first few years, however, I could not believe that there was censorship when two early pieces I wrote were rejected. I had fervent respect for American journalism — or at least for the responsible segment of it. It had to be the quality of my writing, I told myself, or that my views, though carefully researched were somehow distorted.

The Watergate investigations (despite the crass commercialism of media overexposure), the Sam Irwin Senate Committee hearings, the law under Judge Sirica, were all deeply inspiring and reassuring that Democracy was alive and well in America, at least among that segment of it that remained true to its founding principles. Above all, the heroic fight for truth, justice (and the American way?) by one newspaper against the U.S. President drew me like a magnet. I took a cut in salary to join *The Washington Post*.

In the months following Mr. Nixon's removal, and after I had resigned from *The Washington Post*, I set about writing "controversial" articles with increased zeal but with no greater success. Some well-known columnists and journalists felt the viewpoint and analyses were incisive and convincing, but — as columnist Harriet Van

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\* The United States's real Bicentennial was in fact not until 1983. In 1776, America merely agreed to fight for independence. The Treaty of Paris in 1783 gave that independence. The first President did not office until 1789.

Horne said — they were not editors. Some editors were complimentary, others plainly hostile. Editors of leading magazines felt the pieces were either too “intellectual” or otherwise not suited for their readership. Some magazines delayed over two months in returning the pieces, two never returned them, at least one used more than one thought from a piece almost verbatim subsequently, and in that selective use, reached a different and self-serving conclusion.

It is hard, and irrelevant, to even try to express the anguish this creates in one who had come to fervently believe in American journalism. The hard fact, however, had to be faced. The thrust of most of these articles had been that to a large measure, public maleducation and media-generated misconceptions about themselves and the world at large were at the core of America’s recent problems; that commercial media — especially commercial TV and its Special Interests alignment — was a cancer far worse than we actually realized.

I still did not understand that while my main criticism was directed at commercial TV, print media — which owned many commercial TV stations — was not about to allow the very concept of commercial TV to be questioned. And while criticism of Apple Pie was then, for a brief period, the fashion, I was not attacking Apple Pie, *but the ingredients that made it rancid*.

The reaction of media personalities is perhaps best exemplified by reproducing a letter to me from Ben Bradlee, Executive Editor, *The Washington Post*, dated December 22, 1975:

Dear Aslam:

I have read your piece and I have no quibble with it. I never have had a quibble with it, even though I might have used different language.

Basically, as a representative of the Third World, you are saying that America glorifies itself and deprecates others to its ultimate peril.

I am sure that is true.

What the problem is, I think, centers on how terribly important it is to make this statement at this time. I myself would give it a reasonably low priority. I think there is much more wrong with America than that, I think there are much more important matters about the Third World to be discussed.

Perhaps that is what is bothering various editors.

Cordially,  
Ben Bradlee

Events since 1975 have proven me right, I believe. But that is not the point here. I did and I still do regard Ben Bradlee to be one of the luminaries of contemporary America and he was very good to me when I was at the *Post*. But if he saw the issues raised in that piece as not important, and if he, a civil libertarian, felt that editors should decide what views should be printed and which should not (it was a former *Post* editor who in fact had dubbed this editorial claim to omnipotence, “the Jehova complex”) then there was a lot of spade work needed. Bradlee knew much before this that I thought independently and did not hesitate to express my views, no matter who was involved. How then had I suddenly become, after so many years in the U.S., a “representative of the Third World”? Did one immediately become a “furriner” if one expressed the view that commercial media’s perpetual flattery of Americans (as



buyers) was a cancer on the nation, and through it, the world? Why had the other issues raised in that piece not registered on Ben Bradlee's mind, i.e., the unmeasured but real hypnotic effect of television as a medium, the extreme dangers to the nation from commercial ownership, the monopolistic hold of Special Interests on most of U.S. media? A month before, Sander Vanocur (formerly NBC-TV correspondent but TV editor at the *Post* in 1975) had asked that I cut down that same article to one thousand words and he would publish it in the TV section of the *Post*. In desperation, I agreed. The condensed version was said to be very good but the piece was not published. Fred Ferris, the *Herald Tribune* veteran, felt it should be published and had sent it himself to editors of publications he personally knew well. He got rejections without explanation. I had then sent the piece to several magazines without success. Then on January 15, 1976, *The Washington Star* (the other major Washington paper, not as yet bought by the Time conglomerate) bought the piece. Thereafter, for weeks, Associate Editor, Bob Burger, assured me that it was on "the electronics" and that it would be published any week now in the prestigious Sunday editorial section. Months later, before I went abroad for a while, Editor Yoder assured me that it would be published with very slight changes and he promised to send me a voucher copy himself, to London. The voucher copy never came; the article was never published.

It all led to a major upheaval within me, an entirely new perspective and awareness of how extreme media censorship was. Censorship by media, not of media. In the post-Watergate era, it had very disgusting overtones.

A book was necessary. I had thought of writing such a book for a long time now, but corporate commitments had made it impractical. A book that went step by step, reviewing early American history and its objectives and relating in some detail how the present had moved away from those objectives and why; *factual* history, not one loaded with myths, legends and self-serving distortions which Americans and the world had been saturated with for so long. This historical perspective was essential to show how Special Interests (*real* Special Interests) had developed and how, especially through commercial media's great power and its political lackeys, had gradually strangled and were in the process of uprooting the moral foundation of the country. All of media had obviously not been party to an orchestrated campaign but I knew how it had come about especially from my many years in the image-making professions. Back in 1972, I had completed a draft of a novel that had covered these issues, but it had also been inextricably woven into the grave dangers of Nixon's election practices and his administration. But soon, thereafter, had come the Watergate disclosures. To warn against the real Nixon and his chicanery was suddenly *passee*.

In 1975, I was convinced that the fundamental issues were too serious to be handled lightly under cover of fiction, even though, in this TV era, that format would have far better reception. If my hypotheses were correct, it was much too late for flip treatment, innuendoes, tactful suggestiveness and all the various devices that are usually required for an author's wellbeing.

For a book in which such controversial and unusual views were to be expressed, it was essential that a vast amount of additional data be researched. Clearly, we were headed for upheavals. The signs were staring us in the face, in 1975. But the facts I had collected were not enough to back all the points I wished to make, my conclusions in many critical ways were different, even diametrically opposed to what the public was used to hearing from media. Therefore, an abundance of irrefutable evidence was necessary.

Could all of these issues be covered in one book? Convention dictated that a book should deal with one subject such as U.S. history and politics, the Middle East, Big Business, the Military, misuse of advertising and psychological tools, media, even a *separate* volume on the subliminal dangers of television. Some authors had written on one subject and made references to one or more of another, but publishers were accustomed to books that could have a clear-cut prime market objective, making their own evaluation easier. Publishers did not like a very lengthy MS, and anything even mildly critical of political Zionism would be extremely difficult to get printed, especially in the U.S.

And yet it had to be done. All these issues were not separate, they *were* inter-related and inter-dependant. Readers of a book on one subject might be convinced on that issue, but would have questions or convictions formed from media persuasion on other issues making the entire picture and solutions half-convincing, at best.

There were occasions when I despaired of my commitment to my project. Gross materialism had already reached a level in some parts of the world where it would rival, even surpass that in America. Television was commercial in many countries and it aped American TV and advertising commercials as best it could, which was often very poorly. At the other extreme from the U.S., however, there was little or no research in many developing countries, so that much of the advertising was clearly a waste, patterned as it was as if to American consumers. Where television was not commercial, it was government controlled in its programming and dull propaganda. In either case, it attempted to glorify its audiences, usually with methods learned from the U.S. The imagination boggled at where we were headed for, in an age where Might was Right, when military build-up was becoming a priority everywhere and concurrently television, which was said to have made a "global village" was, in fact, making innumerable pockets of chauvinism around the world.

This is by no means to contend, of course, that all American influence is harmful. The American Experiment has been an inspiration to the world from the start and its true adherents have often provided their own inspiration. Even today, there is that "other America", attempting to get its voice heard periodically, but having, with Power Cartel media control, little opportunity to be heard; all too often, when the views of representatives of that real "other America" are heard, they are distorted in their interpretation by media.

The world has a great deal to learn constructively from the U.S. as the bastion of democracy, even from Big Business when it acts responsibly. What has made the battle to "contain" communism ludicrous is that those who talk with the loudest voices as the champions of liberty, freedom and democracy are, all too often, the worst enemies of real democracy. Exploitation simply uses democracy and its freedoms for its own ends. In fact, had the U.S. remained true to its founding principles and beliefs, communism would have died a natural death long ago. "I know but one code of morality for men, whether acting singly or collectively" said that remarkable American founder, Thomas Jefferson. In other words, as a nation, do unto others as you would have them do it unto you. Had the U.S. stayed firmly with such basic beliefs, it would have been even more prosperous and a far more respected nation today. But then all those machiavellian professionals — politicians, strategists, economic experts, and media commentators — would be where they belong. In oblivion.

Research for this book has required endless hours of TV viewing, endless hours



of maintaining records of print articles, TV news and entertainment programs. I have done my best to be as meticulous about quotes as I could be, but because all quotes are not derived from video tapes and transcripts, there may be a word here or there that is not exact. The meaning, however, has never been changed, at any time. Statistics have presented even greater problems on occasions, because they differ, at times, from one source to the next. I have taken every precaution to make them as accurate as is humanly possible when literally thousands of numbers have to be collected, analysed, rechecked, proof-read.

It has been a very difficult time to live through. I expected severe financial straits, attempting to live for years mainly on savings in wildly inflationary times. But illhealth — including a ruptured disc — caused unexpected problems. I expected roadblocks to be placed against my undertakings, but never the kind of horrors that were inflicted especially from 1976 to 1980. It is not necessary to go into the sordid details. All that happened made me only more determined to complete the project. I have not received any financial aid for this project whatsoever, not even from relatives — they have never shared my views or my interest in these matters anyway, even in the broadest terms. And that is putting it mildly. The freedom from any vested interests has allowed me to be as objective — or, for that matter, as subjective — as I wished, letting my conscience be my guide.

Undoubtedly, my motives will be questioned. Born in India, I may be accused of bias towards the Third World. Is my attitude towards media conditioned by personal bitterness and frustrations? I think it may be. Certainly I have looked deeper into media with suspicion from the time of my disillusionment. But in fairness to myself I should add that one of my constant concerns in the U.S. has always been the enormous media clout, especially the subliminal power of visual media. As a corporate researcher it never ceased to amaze me. Even without any ulterior motives that I now see in major media, therefore, that enormous power has always seemed to me to be intrinsically damaging — the medium, even apart from the message. My one request is that the gut issues and the evidence that is provided should be considered apart from any mudslinging at my presumed motives. To allow such diversionary tactics to work would be like refusing to find a cure for cancer because a victim of one kind of cancer claims that a cure is essential and has provided solid evidence to show in which direction that cure might lie.

To forestall at least some aspects of future smears, I should provide some basic facts about myself here. I have resided in the U.S. since January 1965, am a naturalized American, born in what was once called an upper-class family in India, of a pseudo-British environment, even by choice an Anglophile in my formative years, in some ways a traditional Conservative (though never a "New Conservative"). Dearly though I loved London, in the early Sixties, the migration of Asians and East Africans had just started and already there were reports of British resentment. I did not want to stick around to see if in fact prejudice would rear its ugly head. The U.S. has always fascinated me, on the one hand for the intellectual-idealists who founded it, and on the other for its wholesome living and general glamor. At first, even its crass commercialism had its appeal as being at least devoid of hypocrisy. I have worked for several major multinationals and advertising agencies, as an executive in advertising, marketing and marketing research — overseas for Cadbury and for Ogilvy & Mather, in the U.S. for Richardson-Vicks, Lever Brothers, Clorox, D'Arcy McManus Masius, VanSant Dugdale. I have delved into the minds of at least two million Americans in psychological and attitudinal research over the years, pursued my own

research as I travelled through the country several times. I have lived in New York, San Francisco, Hollywood, Baltimore, the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington D.C., and Ann Arbor, Michigan. I have lived within the communities of the young, the hedonists, as well as "Middle America" and the affluent. It was not planned that way; it just happened. And I have worked for *The Washington Post* briefly during Watergate and had other adventures in media since.

I am not a communist, never have been. By background, temperament and convictions, I am entirely unsuited for totalitarianism. I do firmly believe however that until we humans become truly civilized we need laws to control our primitive tendencies. Insofar as my views on political zionism are concerned, I should state — perhaps defensively, but truthfully — that I have, and always have had, many Jewish friends, some who have been very close for years. I cannot claim to have any Arab friends, other than a young couple I have met in just the past three years. Attempting to get more facts about the Third World and — in retrospect — foolish adventures into the Muslim world in recent years has been rewarding in some ways, but fraught with great disillusionment in other ways. Those negative experiences have not, however, altered my conviction in just rights.

The views expressed here may seem pontifical, self-righteous. I can only state that my own traits and lifestyle have often included some of the traits that I may criticize. It is not self-righteousness but an attempt to recognize and express, objectively, the consequences of such traits that we too often explain away as "human nature".

Successful authors must have many qualities but one that usually counts is the ability to flatter the target readership market, to make it feel good subtly or obviously in an age when commercial media has made the public always expect it. There have been those who have become overnight successes, from French-American "Ted Morgan" to West Indian Naipaul. The aim in this book, however, is to avoid flattering Americans. It is my conviction that exploitative commercial media and politicians have inflated the American ego far beyond the danger zone. With such a belief, to feed the public more flattery now is tantamount to feeding drugs to an addict and calling that affection and loyalty. The good in America, however, that submerged "other America" must be mentioned and made known. It is submerged, though it includes many Haves, it is in tune with the founding principles and it is this America whom media keeps obscure which many countries, especially the Third World, should know, and learn from, not the tinsel-town media-promoted crass commercial exploitation that is projected as Democracy.

Frankly, I have been sorely tempted to avoid some of the more sensitive issues, such as the ramifications of nouveau riche values and proletariat tendencies. I know that this will irritate even the Americans I admire most. But that avoidance is not possible. So much of the present is related to such issues and tendencies. Our extreme sensitivity on the issue in fact shows that it is the core of the cancer. I have also felt very uneasy about criticizing my adopted country, which overall, has been very good to me personally. Among friends I have often been critical in the past twenty two years, but that criticism has been accepted almost always because my respect for America's founding principles has been well-known. The executive level I have enjoyed at some of the prestigious American conglomerates has been unusual for an Asian-born. I have also known that my outspoken criticism in that period, of corporate lack of ethics and corporate restraints on personal lifestyle made it very likely — despite the promotions and accolades I enjoyed — for me to become Top



Management. And, to be fair, for good, understandable reasons. Mine was, at best, irreverent loyalty to corporations and I always knew — as did Top Management — that I would never remain in corporate life indefinitely. The limitations — except for the blacklist of the late Seventies — was of my own creation. It has nothing to do with the fact that I was Asian-born. (I should hasten to add that the “blacklist” attempt against me has probably been lifted. In 1978, I was able, through corporate friends, to unearth the nature of the blatant falsehoods that the mysterious smear campaign was generating and in 1979, I agreed to drop all legal action in exchange for an unconditional letter of apology, which I did receive.)

It is easier for a foreign-born to merge into the American mainstream than it would be in most countries. At least that is my opinion. But to do that, one must be willing to lose oneself entirely into present-day American value system. To most foreigners who migrate, this is no doubt acceptable, even an appealing prospect. Today, more than ever, almost all those who migrate to the U.S. do so to improve their economic lot. Other issues are not important, or at best, secondary. Those who may criticize, reluctantly, might do so only on issues that are of self-interest. And those who come to the U.S. know very quickly how much Americans love flattery, no matter how superficial. For personal well-being, therefore, foreigners — visitors or immigrants — quickly grasp that. Flattery serves in any country, of course, but it would be hard to find one where it serves as well as in the U.S.

A point must be made in this regard. The crux of the criticism levied against American attitudes here is towards the milieu that has created those attitudes and beliefs, not at some innate qualities in the American public itself. Indeed, it might be fair to say, that if the people of any other country had been made suddenly very rich and powerful and subjected to the thundering barrage of exploitative media throughout their lives, they could have developed more dangerous and less humane characteristics than the American people generally have. Those redeeming qualities in America that have buffered the extreme dangers have been the founding principles and its cosmopolitan composition.

I have no illusions about the fact that this effort will be no more than a drop in the ocean. I also know that my life could well be in jeopardy from the day this book is published. But having completed it — whatever its merit — makes up for all the heartaches and sacrifices of the past ten years. The only other real value I hope for is that it may provide a record on some vital issues of our time for a future generation — if we let there be one — who may be willing to listen to the sound of a different drummer. I know that today, with the nation thoroughly infatuated with “me-first” chauvinism, it cannot be a commercial success. Unless, of course, it is Banned In Boston.

Does a naturalized American have the right to be critical of the institutions in his country? I believe that it is more than a right. It is a duty. The preamble to this book quotes from a speech made to naturalized Americans by a true American, President Woodrow Wilson, in which he says, “If I have in any degree forgotten what American was intended for, I will thank God if you will remind me .... Just because you brought dreams with you, America is more likely to realize dreams such as you brought. You are enriching us if you come expecting us to be better than we are .... ”

The first of these is the question of the origin of the human race. It is generally admitted that the human race is descended from a common ancestor, but the question of the exact nature of this ancestor is still a matter of debate. Some authorities believe that the human race is descended from a common ancestor which was a mixture of the ape and the monkey, while others believe that it is descended from a common ancestor which was a mixture of the monkey and the ape. The question of the origin of the human race is a very important one, and it is one which has attracted the attention of many of the most distinguished scientists of the present day.

The second of these questions is the question of the development of the human race. It is generally admitted that the human race has developed from a common ancestor, but the question of the exact nature of this development is still a matter of debate. Some authorities believe that the human race has developed from a common ancestor which was a mixture of the ape and the monkey, while others believe that it is descended from a common ancestor which was a mixture of the monkey and the ape. The question of the development of the human race is a very important one, and it is one which has attracted the attention of many of the most distinguished scientists of the present day.

The third of these questions is the question of the future of the human race. It is generally admitted that the human race will continue to develop, but the question of the exact nature of this development is still a matter of debate. Some authorities believe that the human race will continue to develop from a common ancestor which was a mixture of the ape and the monkey, while others believe that it is descended from a common ancestor which was a mixture of the monkey and the ape. The question of the future of the human race is a very important one, and it is one which has attracted the attention of many of the most distinguished scientists of the present day.

The fourth of these questions is the question of the present state of the human race. It is generally admitted that the human race is at present in a state of development, but the question of the exact nature of this development is still a matter of debate. Some authorities believe that the human race is at present in a state of development from a common ancestor which was a mixture of the ape and the monkey, while others believe that it is descended from a common ancestor which was a mixture of the monkey and the ape. The question of the present state of the human race is a very important one, and it is one which has attracted the attention of many of the most distinguished scientists of the present day.



## *Preface*

Sometimes, history repeats itself quite dramatically, and we remember that. For instance, a few years before the Centennial celebrations, Abraham Lincoln, a much-loved President was murdered. A few years prior to the Bicentennial celebrations, John F. Kennedy, a much-loved President, was murdered. There were obvious covers-up of the culprits involved in both murders. Evidence disappeared, as did witnesses. Enough evidence survived eventually to suggest involvement in "high places". Both had Vice-Presidents named Johnson. Both Johnsons were followed by highly corrupt administrations. Both Grant and Nixon were not directly punished by the courts, though many of their aides were.

Sometimes history repeats itself in less dramatic ways, but with even greater import, nationally and internationally. If the history we are taught had not been whitewashed and laundered, generation after generation, we would have always known the essential difference between the Thomas Jeffersons and the Alexander Hamiltons in a free, democratic society, and recognize them, each time...

Sometimes trends recur, either because we have forgotten, or been ignorant of the real facts of past occurrences. The "Red Menace" concern has no doubt occurred on occasions because of some excesses of the communists. But "Red Menace" hysteria has recurred (in the 1920s, the 1950s and now) when we have strayed farthest from the basic principles of democracy and the American Experiment, and when somehow, some "Special Interests" tend to gain heavily from such a mood.

In the post-Lincoln/Johnson era, Big Money, Monopolists and "Special Interests" became entrenched as the patrons of political power and elective office. Since then they have had a few setbacks, periodically, in public opinion, but they have emerged, more experienced each time, in directing public attitudes and beliefs. By and large, the lethal power of Big Business media has had a great deal to do with this, especially with the advent of visual media.

Their message has always been predictable: when Big Business makes money, everyone benefits; so let the very rich make plenty, then they can pass along a little to the rest; do not interfere (place regulations) on Big Business, that can be disastrous; "the business of America is business"; Big Business brings prestige to America. From Grant to McKinley, from Harding to Hoover, from Nixon to Ford to Reagan, the basic message has never varied, only more sophisticated techniques have been employed to communicate it. What we seldom realize is that if the words "Big Business" are substituted by "Aristocracy", then what is being advocated is Feudalism.

There have been recessions, depression, scandals, corruptions galore under such policies. The Franklin Roosevelt years proved them conclusively wrong. But the skills

and the powers of present-day image-making continue to work wonders with the public. The growing control of Very Big Business now edging back in the hands of a very few (the rebirth of the Monopolists) can occasionally add dramatic proof to back the story. By a strange — but not too obvious — series of coincidences, in this age of the Monopolists, recession, inflation and “lack of confidence” can occur when the Monopolists consider the incumbent President to be unfriendly; conversely, there can be an inexplicable revival of the economy, when a friendly President requires it — at least until he has made a point, or been re-elected. In the final analyses, we cannot blame Big Business Monopolists for trying. Why should they not? We are the ones to blame, for letting it happen in a free democracy.

This is by no means to suggest that in a democracy all economic trends are artificially created; there are, as we shall see, some foolish mistakes made and some factors beyond anyone's control. There have been critical psychological factors too — ignored by the economic experts. When a Nobel Laureat talks, people listen. They do not ask themselves if, in his abstractions, he has taken into consideration critical factors other than the standard economic measures; or what his political affiliations might be.

We are trained to be in awe of the experts, the successful, the self-assured. We do not ask ourselves why he or she voices that opinion, how often those words were carefully scripted and rehearsed; what the speaker's own interests are and whether those interests are the same as those of the nation and all of its people. Often all he or she has to do is wave the flag with a few patriotic comments and we are sold.

This awe, this mental pliability is the result of our training in the Television Age; the medium itself has intrinsic powers beyond our awareness; but if that were not enough, it is almost entirely in the hands of Big Business. Individual news performers on TV, like some in print, may be genuinely concerned about the medium and its slant under commercial ownership and political bias. But the monetary rewards are so enticing, that most, if not all of this tiny minority can, and do, find rationales for the work they do upon the public mind, day after day. How powerful these pressures are can only be known from within.

It must be clearly understood that all business and all media are not accused of being part of a planned conspiracy. In fact, as we shall see, some moderate sized and many small businesses are the worst victims of present conditions. Some of the latter erroneously assume that their own interests are threatened by any criticism of Big Business; they have been made to feel that way. And because they add their weight, reform is made harder; they suffer and the economy suffers.

Each major scandal in America's short history has been followed by a period of soul-searching. Nixon's Watergate, the result of genuinely brilliant journalism, was followed by sensationalized, overblown media saturation. Where, asked commercial media, did we go wrong? They talked, argued, reviewed ad nauseum. Some were undoubtedly sincere; a few were undoubtedly seeking for the real causes of America's ills. But the very nature of their vehicle defeats serious thought. Commercial media exists to sell and profit. Truth, in the final analyses, must become subservient, if it can erode on that objective. The audience (the prospects) must be flattered or sympathized with, otherwise ratings, circulation and advertising revenues — from toilet paper to automobiles companies — are in jeopardy. Unvarnished truth does not sell products. Unfortunately, self-glorification also leads to destructive economic and social consequences at home, and in foreign policy.

The real well-oiled political image-making machine, with all its highly skilled



ancillaries, has — except for becoming a worn-out cliché — remained undiscovered. It learned from Watergate, became more sophisticated, and was soon functioning with even greater efficiency. Now it has produced its ultimate triumph of fantasy over reality, in propping an actor, no less, in the most powerful office in the world. For those who engineered his election, he is the ideal candidate; all they needed was the right outer husk which they could feed with words to communicate and convince. As an actor of 51 movies, and over fifty years in movieland, he can do that very well — far better than his predecessors to the presidency, who may have wasted their lives in pursuits other than acting.

The problems that face America today — and through it the world — are more complex and more dangerous than they have ever been. The ostensible danger lies in nuclear obliteration, but the real danger lies in our unwillingness to look at the cause, only the effect, when the cause requires the examination of facts that are not pleasant to us. Consequently, problems will not go away, only become more complex and more dangerous, more difficult to solve. Today, the well-oiled and extremely well-heeled image-making machine has trampled across American frontiers, successfully returning the American public to the 1950s values, after the questions raised in the past two decades; this remarkable success has caused it to be sent across the American frontiers into other lands, no doubt at the invitation of certain aspiring — and similarly motivated — politicians overseas. Britain has by now become no more than the fifty-first State, its political campaigns — overt and covert — conducted by American experts and those trained by American experts. Significantly, Britain's problems are now, in many ways, a reverberation of America's problems — if anything, more so; unaware as the American public is, in many instances, of what is going on, the British public is entirely naive in how the machine operates, once it rolls up its sleeves. And Britain is not the only country where we are exporting such expertise.

Today, the democracy we export is, in many ways, more destructive of the democratic cause than communism could ever be. Democracy, when correctly practiced, is so obviously the superior system compared to communism. Those who persist in being hysterically afraid of communism and obsessed with it, are those who use the freedoms of democracy for anarchy and exploitation. It is only under such misuse of democratic freedoms that communism makes inroads. The greedy and the ruthless among us have been the real purveyors of communism, its respirators.

Much of what the American public has allowed to be done in its name has been through ignorance, and worse — through misinformation. Misplaced confidence in misinformation is much more dangerous than being wholly ignorant yet aware of that ignorance. Undoubtedly, a society dominated by commercial media and the image-making ancillaries for so long has had little chance to become genuinely informed. Thomas Jefferson said that a free press was even more important than a free government. But in his own lifetime, he pointed out the difference between what he meant by a free press and what was developing under the guise of a free press. Were he around today, what he may have to say about present-day commercial media — or at least some segments of it — would probably be unprintable...

It would be fair to say, however, that were the people of another land subjected to the same type and intensity of media domination, they would have suffered worse afflictions. The American public has had the saving grace in the strength of its founding principles and in the stream of consciousness — faint though it may have been at times — of the "other America", that segment which, despite the odds, has

remained true to the original values and aspirations. This "other America" has not of course been some identifiable political, social or regional segment. Somehow those original values have filtered through the generations and been absorbed at different levels, in different parts — by a farmer, a politician, a housewife, a reporter.

As citizens, generally, however, we have been star-struck, ignorant, and willing to be led by the nose to mindboggling contradictions. In just the past decade, we said "make love, not war", and then went on to sanction the most outrageously expensive military build-up in history. We said that America should not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, then went on to sanction the most blatant, provable interferences (a June 1983 *New York Times* — CBS poll found that only 13% of Americans knew which side America is involved with in the Nicaraguan invasion, and only 25% knew whom the American government supports in San Salvador).

We said the CIA should be made answerable, then went on to make it sacrosanct again; we said we wanted "morality in government", then ridiculed and discarded a moral President, at the instance of the Power Cartel, who decided that he should be ousted principally because his morality was too real; we claimed to be the bastion of democracy, then went on to sanction the practice of the most blatant racial, national and religious prejudices in its name; we claimed to be the champions of free trade, then went on to place one industry after another under Federal "protection" against foreign competition; we claim to be on a "conservative" trend, yet never have we departed as far away from the founding principles as we are now; we talk of democratic "equal opportunities" then went on to sanction the "trickle down" economic theory, the most brazen form of feudalism practiced in centuries by any nation. The list can go on and on...

We could claim — as we are wont to do, after a scandal or a crisis — to be the victims, to be put upon. Commercial media commiserates with the public at such times and we love it for doing that. But someone who is not attempting to sell toilet paper or automobiles might find other words for a public that is willing to be taken in, time, after time, after time. And that is frivolous and irresponsible citizenry. "A nation that expects to be ignorant and free ... expects what never was, and never will be" said the incisive Thomas Jefferson. The odds are stacked against us, but we cannot merely blame the snake-oil salesman for his salesmanship, whatever garb he appears in. We must learn to recognize him, no matter how "respectable" his outer husk may seem.

One of the perennial problems afflicting us is our enormous dependence on TV performers — in news and entertainment. These immensely-paid stars are not likely to point to themselves or their system as a major cause of our problems. In an age when genuine conservative values prevailed, mankind knew that dependence on showbiz fantasies, no matter how skilled, was juvenile and destructive. In our age of pseudo-values, we have gone the other direction in recent years and refused to turn back. We have shied away from retracing our steps. It is ironic that now, when we have turned back in this "Conservative" age it has been to the 1950s values, where the real departure from the founding principles consciously took shape. And we have done this, because The Powers-That-Be wanted those pseudo-values to prevail. Any real attempt to examine our values has been seen by us as "turning the clock back" even "Un-American" and we find rationales to reject that.

As a nation, we have been extremely fortunate; in the unique Experiment that was started here; in the quality of some of those who founded it; in the enormous



riches that the land had, which — if truth be told — is why we have and we will always be a very wealthy country, no matter how many mistakes we make.

And we have had the great good fortune to have had danger signs tell us periodically that we are headed for pitfalls; we appear to learn from them, but because we do not examine the real causes, we go right back to the same mistakes. "Those who do not recall the past are condemned to relive it" as Santayana said.

We may not always realize it, but our influence over other countries is enormous; people even in countries that may be antagonistic, tend to ape us; all too often, this aping is not of the best in America; it is harmful to them, and, as we shall see, it boomerangs on us too.

As citizens of the most powerful and the richest nation on earth, we enjoy great privileges. And that is fine. But as the vanguards of democracy, we have very serious responsibilities too, not just in flag-waving or in mouthing platitudes and clichés, echoed from the TV news performers or politicians. We have to know facts. We have to be real patriots of the American Experiment. We have to find solutions in very difficult and dangerous times, which have become so difficult and so dangerous because we did not start to look at the true facts before; history might label us the vandals not the saviors of democracy.

The times demand that we make every effort to shake off emotions that cloud or confuse issues, that we overcome brainwash and face hard facts as the only way to solve problems. We should also be willing to carefully judge public figures as our duty in a democracy, judge them fairly but also strictly at times, when the occasion demands it. In many ways, public figure forfeit rights that other individuals have, especially when their influence and power over the minds and lives of millions of people can lead to great public suffering. They have sought the limelight, sought leadership, sought the power, the glamor, the riches that go with celebrity status and must also accept the responsibility that goes with it all.

If we look through American history, not whitewashed, self-glorifying, laundered, commercialized versions of it; if we painstakingly look at some of the milestones — political, social, economic — and look through them honestly, unflinchingly, we may yet find the causes and the solutions, staring us in the face ...

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# 1

## *"We, The People..."*

(i)

Generally those who uproot themselves from one country and migrate to a new one are those who have little to lose and a lot to gain from the gamble. This was particularly true for those who decided to chance the uncertainties of the American wilderness from the miseries of Tudor England. Expansionism was already beginning to take shape in Elizabethan times. Piracy (called privateering) was not merely condoned but looked upon as an act of nobility, provided it was undertaken in the name of Good Queen Bess.\* In the second half of the sixteenth century, the nobility were very rich and the poor not only remained poor but multiplied in number. Strong recommendations were being made in Parliament "to rid our multitudes such as lie at home pestering the land with pestilence and penury and infecting one another with vice and villainy".

Commencing therefore, with the London Company of Virginia (founded 1606), a series of settlements were planned in the American wilderness, ostensibly for "propagating of Christian religion" among the "infidels and savages, living in those parts". Those "savages and infidels" had of course already been found to have remarkable treasures first realized by the early Spanish explorers for the insatiable Isabella; it made soul-saving of the savages irresistible. Already the Spanish had begun the process in North America since 1564, when the first fort, St. Augustine, was built in Florida.

Shortly after the London Company, the Plymouth Company was formed. Other charter companies followed, offering free passages and work for England's oppressed poor in the newly created colonies along the eastern coast of North America.

The attractions of the American wilderness however were few, and so many, even the lowliest, had to be forced or tempted to come. In 1619, the first of several cargoes of "young maidens" arrived from England; at least some of them had been convicted of practicing the oldest profession and offered the choice of Newgate prison or deportation to America. Each Virginia settler who could pay 120 lbs. of tobacco was allowed to take one for a wife. In that same year a Dutch ship with "negro" slaves sold twenty of them to the settlers. There were to be more shiploads of both cargoes in the near future. Fifteen million "negro" slaves were to be taken to the Americas by the British, Spanish, Dutch, French and the Portuguese before it all ended. In the

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\* The "Virgin Queen", the illegitimate daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, combined a ferocious appetite for men and beer with an equally remarkable talent to inspire colonialism.

process another fifteen million were to die through disease, chastisement and fatigue in transport.

In the next century and a half, many thousands of Europe's poor and oppressed were to come, most in semi or full bondage (depending on the terms with each Company) on the chartered vessels. The colonies from New England to Virginia prospered as they pushed the Indians westwards. There had been rough periods (in 1609 for instance, the Virginian settlers, according to contemporary reports, had to eat dogs, mice, snakes and even dead humans). But by the first half of the eighteenth century, there were now several wealthy farmers and plantation owners. Economic systems and legislative rights had been introduced. Incentives, such as free land to cultivate after the contracted period of servitude, had made the American shores more attractive and many more of Europe's poor had taken the plunge to the New World. Southern plantations prospered. The purchase of negro slaves had become a very profitable trade. The price was more than compensated by free labor, not only of the purchased slaves but the offspring they produced for the service of the owners. The South prospered more. Stories of these fortunes attracted more of the poor from Europe. Gottlieb Mittelberger, a contemporary of the time, who journeyed over, records a typical passenger cargo from Europe, where "the sale of human beings in the market is carried on ... many parents must sell and trade away their children like so many heads of cattle; for if the children take the debt upon themselves, the parents can leave the ship free and unrestrained... Other adult persons bind themselves in writing to serve 3, 4, 5 or 6 years for the amount [passage money] due by them, according to their age and strength. But the very young people, from 10 to 15 years, must serve until they are twenty one years old". These were, of course, *white* migrants from Europe, not African slaves, though the latter were becoming, by the eighteenth century, a larger and more important part of labor than white servitude, even when slavery had been made illegal in many Northern States.

Democracy and Individual Freedom were relatively alien ideas; then came the intellectual idealists of the eighteenth century, the Nature philosophers, inspired by Rousseau. The writings of Paine, Burke, Jefferson, Adams, however, were not known to the illiterate majority. The speeches of the idealists were heard a little more, but not enough to cause change. For the most part, the settlers were more than willing to stay under the Crown. They had a modicum of political autonomy. They were far better off economically than they had ever been in the Old World. Even the few impecunious "younger sons" of upperclass Europe who had come for freedom, or adventures, or fortune-seeking to the New World were wealthier than they had ever been themselves. All the colonies had been formed primarily for economic gains. Even the New England Puritans motivated to flee to America to avoid religious prosecution, sought collective freedom and essentially freedom for themselves, not as a right for every human being; they themselves punished with death, tortures or banishment, those who did not favor the puritanical beliefs and their communities were intensely committed to industry and trade.

Obedience to the British monarch was taken very seriously in many communities. In Virginia, for instance, there were many early settlers who abhorred so strongly the temporary removal of monarchy in England with Cromwell's Puritanism that they took to calling themselves "Cavaliers" (to align themselves with the aristocrat loyalists in England). British Crown Colonies, meanwhile, were expanded steadily by driving the Indian even further inland and overpowering competitive European



adventurers. But that was the only form of fighting British America felt inclined to do.

The settlers were content, then, to hold their lands in fealty to their sovereign king (when Royalty had been restored in England) and to render him homage. But over the years the Crown tended to treat the American settlers contemptuously. There were, consequently, pockets of growing resentment. John Adams (subsequently second President) in *A Dissertation* asked Americans if the British have not "treated us like servants, nay more like slaves than like Britons?". In *A Summary View* Thomas Jefferson reminded people "of the right which nature has given all men, of departing from the country in which chance, not choice has placed them, of going in quest of new habitations, and of their establishing new societies, under such law and regulations as to them shall seem most likely to promote public happiness".

Some understood the philosophy of their views, others did not. Some agreed from expediency rather than conviction; others did not like what they heard. The anger and revolt of the people, however, was aroused eventually by the growing burden of taxation, the attack not so much on their dignity but their pocketbook.

American overseas trade was under complete British control. William Pitt, the British statesman, who was against the levy of indiscriminate taxes, summed up the danger in his speech to the British Parliament. He warned that "We might bind their [American settlers] trade, confine their manufacture and exercise every power whatever, except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their consent". Taxation "without representation" did just that. The extreme unpopularity of the provisions in the Stamp Act led to its repeal, but other taxes, including those on commodities, and other "Coercive" Acts, were instituted. More subtle controls of the colonial economy would have perhaps passed unnoticed, at least by the masses. "Taking money out of their pockets" was a simple enough fact and made them more receptive to the idea of independence and the views of the intellectual-idealists. The American masses saw now why it was wrong to "rest supinely on our backs until our enemies have bound us hand and foot" as Patrick Henry warned.

(ii)

The colonies joined in a Continental Congress. Britain had blundered in underestimating the pocketbook issues, the dedication of the American leaders, and overestimating the power of the Crown over the American settlers. Some who had left Europe and faced the hazards of the voyage and the near-fatal conditions in the American wilderness had done so out of a conscious rejection of feudalism and the Crown. But the vast majority had been willing to undertake such grave risks because they thirsted for material wealth far *more* than the many poor of Europe who stayed behind. Money was extremely important to these settlers. But if Britain understood that and expected some kind of revolt from its burdensome taxes, it also felt no real concern about being able to deal with it, despite its preoccupation with other matters, notably its war with France. Therefore, while some British statesmen and prominent personalities were not in favor of the prevailing British attitude towards the American settlers, there were others who had little sympathy for the American settlers. George III himself was annoyed with the irritating problems of the American wilderness; a man of many talents and interests, from draughtsmanship to microbiology, (he was

wholly different in this respect from the 'dumb boor' image that propaganda was to establish in later years). He found himself already too pressed from his real interests by French hostilities to have patience with the Colonies. Dr. Samuel Johnson, the English literary giant, called the settlers "a race of convicts [that] ought to be thankful for anything we allow them short of hanging", exaggerating the fact that some of the settlers had been convicts who had either fled or been offered the choice of deportation or jail in England. He was also, in his anger against Americans, to later question American sincerity. "How is it" he asked "that we have the loudest yelps for liberty among the purveyors of slavery?". Lord Sandwich addressing the House of Lords said "Suppose the colonies do abound in men" — estimated at the time to be 300,000 adults male settlers — "what does that signify? They are raw, undisciplined, cowardly men ... the very sound of cannon would carry them off ... as fast as their feet could carry them".

Sandwich was only partially right. Many did run, but not all. The unlikely and feeble marriage between the "radical" idealists and the masses, however, gave extra incentive to the "raw, undisciplined, cowardly men". Freedom and liberty took on a meaning they had never understood before. The American War of Independence — or The Revolutionary War as it would be called — began in 1775 and continued until 1783. In 1776, the Continental Congress asked Thomas Jefferson to draft the Declaration Of Independence. The document was signed by several members in 1776, but all did not sign until 1781.\*

The fighting had comprised of a few open battles, but mainly of guerrilla-type warfare. The Americans, familiar with the terrain, were also not obliged to show military fighting skill with this type of warfare (ironically, the method successfully used against America nearly two hundred years later in Vietnam). There were serious American losses however in the first years of fighting and there were many desertions of men who simply walked away and went home; others who were awed into a recurrence of serfdom in their hearts at the sight of the splendidly dressed forces of the King. There were those who fought merely because they were paid, and left when money was not available. Still others who, as merchants, found the British paid better, either switched openly to the British side or acted as British spies. The true spy ring for the British, of course, was provided by some of the American landowners, whose secret "American Dream" now that they were no longer the poor "pestilence", was to be accepted at some level in British society and who hated these hostilities with the Crown which thwarted those yearnings.

But it was the rest, the determined proletariat, who had rallied to the cry of liberty under the idealists; those masses with no training, in tatters, often near starvation, who won the hearts and minds of idealists across the seas. As the War dragged on and the American proletariat seemed increasingly likely to suffer the debacle of a crushing defeat, vital help came from such foreign idealists.

Marquis de Lafayette, the young French aristocrat, was one such idealist; he was so moved that he sailed over in 1777 to join Washington and was to be wounded in battle the same year. It was his effort that was greatly instrumental in gaining French aid for the revolutionaries in 1780 and it was of course that French aid of men and money that turned the tide and gave the revolutionaries their victory. America won its independence with the treaty, signed in Paris in 1783. But it was not without

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\* Technically, therefore, the agreement to form the new Union was not complete in 1776 but in 1781.



dissensions among the newly liberated. That same year, for instance, the disbanded American army, unpaid and angry, caused the new nation's Congressmen to flee Philadelphia in panic.

A nation had been created but the ideological revolution was only beginning.

## 2

# *The New Nation*

(i)

**P**rofilic commercial media, with its weight and frequency, was in later years to distort, almost beyond recognition, many critical periods in world history. But few periods have been so thoroughly contaminated with myths, legends, exaggerations and misplaced chauvinism, than the early years of the American Republic. To learn from history, however, it is necessary to know the truth, a fact seldom challenged, yet even less often followed.

Much of what was to be established as “popular folklore”, may be considered relatively innocuous, even though future generations were to be convinced of its authenticity. There was, for instance, no such thing as a Battle of Bunker Hill. The revolutionaries were on Breed Hill and the British won that battle, though it was no more than a pyrrhic victory. Paul Revere’s Ride to announce “The British are coming” and “once if by land, two if by sea” has no supportive historical proof — just folklore such as Longfellow’s poem. Revere, according to some responsible historians, was not even present at the Battle of Lexington. His claim to fame — seldom recognized — is that he made the first set of dentures for Washington, a set of wooden teeth.

There is no substantive evidence — other than the claim of her grandchildren — that Betty Ross designed the American flag. If William Prescott ever said “Don’t fire until you see the whites of their eyes”, he was preceded (an astonishing coincidence!) by at least two world figures, Prince Charles of Prussia “Silent until you see the whites of their eyes”, and Frederick the Great “No firing till you see the whites of their eyes”. Nathaniel Hale did not say “I regret that I have only one life to lose for my country”. His actual words were “It is the duty of every good officer to obey any orders given by his commander-in-chief.” (see *The Directory of Misinformation* by Tom Burnam).

George Washington could not have thrown a dollar across the Potomac. His boyhood was spent hundreds of miles away from that river, and, in any case, the coinage in America of the time was British. The Washington cherry tree story (a fiction created by a parson) is, of course a total myth, among the many that have mushroomed around George Washington over the years. The Pokahantas/John Smith story is without any historical evidence. Its source was Smith himself, and he never enjoyed a reputation for honesty during his own times. Smith did not tell the tale until twenty years after he claimed it had happened. His own earlier accounts about

Powhatan, Pokahantas' father, had in fact claimed that Powhatan had been very friendly, according to Prof. Burnam.

Less innocuous and a lot more gruesome (though with unparalleled profits for its purveyors) has been the practice of perpetuating myths and distortions against the American Indians, especially after the advent of commercial visual media. At various times, some of the Indian tribes became violently hostile, especially when their naive belief in the friendship of the White Man resulted for them in stark tragedies. It is significant that in reality the Indian initially never had any weapon like the tomahawk that has since been attributed to them. Did scalping originate with the Indians, or did it originate from British America after rewards were proclaimed at fixed rates for the scalp of male, female and child Indian scalps? Specimens from the proclamations of His Majesty's Government still exist.

Journals written at the time, of course, provide a more accurate awareness of the milieu. The population of the new United States (excluding the many millions of American Indians) was nearly 4,000,000, of which about 750,000 were "negroes". There were among the American whites, the educated (especially in New England), the rich (especially among the Southern plantation owners) but for the most part, the new Americans were the European proletariat, enthused over independence for two reasons: the new society where they were not required to bow and scrape to superiors, and in which they had visions of unlimited opportunities to strike it rich.

Ideologically, however, the victory of these proletariat masses under the inspiration of Age of Reason philosophy had reverberations across the World. A daring new concept was born in a world of decaying feudalism and tyranny. It fired the imagination of people the world over. In France, the country of Rousseau and other Nature philosophers, it was to provide the impetus for a bloody revolution, while even in far away India, Emporer Tipu Sultan, attempting to ward off the encroaching British conquest, was moved by the American fight for liberty to offer a small fortune for the care of the newly freed Americans.

Conditions for the survival of the Republic, however, seemed bleak. The new rulers had no experience in their new position and the public was backward and rough. "The great metropolises — by American standards — are Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Charleston and Baltimore. By European standards, however, they were barely medium-sized towns". A censorious Englishman, Isaac Weld (in *Travels through the States of North America*), thought the houses "mean and undistinguished and called her public buildings", with the single exception of the State House "heavy tasteless piles of brick. The waterfront was kneedeep in filth, and the stench that came from it offended the strongest nostrils. No wonder yellow fever was endemic" comments Mr. Schachner (*The Founding Fathers*).

"Cows and pigs were not an uncommon sight on even the main thoroughfares" according to Moreau de St. Mery (*American Journey*) "while dead dogs, cats and rats lay untouched in the streets until natural decay or a supersensitive householder removed them." "Familiar though he [Moreau de St. Mery] was with prerevolutionary Paris, the number of prostitutes who plied their profession with brazen candor in New York amazed him" writes Mr. Schachner.

According to the journal of Mr. Isaac Weld, (as paraphrased by Mr. Schachner) in some Southern States that he travelled through, "a passing remark or even the mere exuberance of drunken spirits, was sufficient to set rough and tumble fights off. No holds were barred, no brutality or inhuman practice held amiss. They wrestled and traded blows, they bit fingers and noses to shreds, they twisted ears legs and arms,



they gouged out eyes with powerful thumbs, they ground heavy boots into hapless faces and kicked ribs, they were even on occasions to seize an unfortunate opponent by the private parts and tear them bloodily away".

Preaching and frenzy went hand in hand among the masses. William Sweet (*Religion on the American frontier*) writes: "In one notable Kentucky instance, ten thousand attended and harkened to a number of preachers performing simultaneously. As the frenzy rose and the contagion spread, one after another the assemblage would jerk in every limb, shout, scream, fall to the ground and roll convulsively, to subside into an epileptic trance. Others ran aimlessly, barked like dogs, or raced shrieking into the neighbouring woods, where enthusiasm occasionally vented itself in a final sexual act."

Rochefoucauld-Liancourt (*Travels in the United States*) mentions practices such as that of Jemima Wilkinson, a Rhode Island Quakeress, who migrated to central New York "where she proclaimed herself not only possessed of prophetic powers but to be the literal bride of Christ. She managed to attract a worshipping following until one day, or rather night, some skeptic discovered that the regular visitant to her bed was a certain Squire Parker, her chief assistant and the alleged incarnation of the Prophet Elijah" says Mr. Schachner.

(ii)

What, then, was this New Nation? In spite of the negatives, an inspiring noble experiment. A new republic, with a unique opportunity to prove that the lower classes of the old world could create a civilized society and uplift themselves, not merely economically but as civilized, refined beings. Survival required intelligent, dedicated, imaginative leadership, and while many in leadership positions were far from this requirement, America had the great good fortune that there were enough who were.

Even so, the start of self-government was itself chaotic. There was considerable resistance from many colony states to surrender power to a central government. The first Congress was to meet on March 4, 1789. Strictly speaking that assemblage would be said to have incorporated the formation of the United States. The start was shaky, however, the country still did not have a President or Vice President. Days and weeks went by, a few Congressmen appeared, but not enough to start proceedings. When Congress finally did convene, and even after the first President had been chosen in 1789, it seemed clear through the clamor and the confusion and diverse viewpoints, that the United States was destined to be less than united.

The two schools of thought that were to rule America over the next two hundred years were soon apparent. There were those who wanted concentrated power in the central government, with a constitution which essentially adopted the British system, replacing as it were, one form of feudalism for another. And there were those who wanted "power for the people". The new government ratified a constitution providing a strong centralized government as fiercely propagated by Hamilton, Madison and John Jay in the eighty-five articles of *The Federalist Papers*.

The Constitution also provided great powers to the President who in fact was almost titled Emporer ("fetus of monarchy", John Randolph was to call it). Despite the fact that independence had been sought in the name of democratic freedom, the Constitution significantly did not provide for safeguarding fundamental liberties of the citizens, such as freedom of speech, press, religion. Strong opposition and

criticism from men such as George Mason of Virginia led to eighty amendments being proposed in 1789 that included these individual freedoms. By 1791, ten of these amendments were passed, to be known as the Bill of Rights.

"What then is the American, this new man?" It was a question made famous by St. John de Crevecoeur that seemed to fascinate many people across the seas at the time and has continued to do so. The fact is that there was not some magical new anthropoid created with independence. Democracy had been known and practised before in human history. But for the first time in the Western Hemisphere a new experiment was commenced (Athens had been a democracy, but not principally of the lower classes) with the belief that if the new civilized principles of equality were truly practiced, a new refined mass society would emerge from a society comprising almost entirely of transported proletariat.

Historically, the world's poor had believed that they were equal to the nobility, if only they had the opportunity. Here, then, would be the acid test. Survival for the initial decades was the critical factor, and among the leadership were the few idealists who were particularly concerned that in the new Republic, imitation of the decaying practices of the Old World was the principal danger. "Europe is grown old in folly, corruption and tyranny — in that country laws are perverted, manners are licentious, literature is declining and human nature debased. For America in her infancy to adopt the present maxims of the old world, would be to stamp the wrinkles of decrepit age upon the bloom of youth" said Noah Webster. In his preface to *The Columbiad* (1807), poet Joel Barlow was soon to voice the idealistic dream: "This is the moment to give such a direction to poetry, printing and the other fine arts, that true and useful ideas of glory may be implanted in the minds of men here, to take place of the false and destructive ones that have degraded the species in other countries". Benjamin Rush had implored Philadelphians to start free schools for children "Where the common people are ignorant and vicious" he said, "a nation, and above all a republican nation, can never be long free and happy". It was the conviction that freedom required an enlightened public that was to rule Thomas Jefferson throughout his life: "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free ... it expects what never was and never will be".

This was then, the core, the quintessence of the true American spirit, the real American Dream provided by the idealist intellectuals. With remarkable foresight, men such as Jefferson saw the grave dangers of exploitation in a free society, if the public was ignorant. Even before, and certainly soon after the creation of the Republic, the exploiters were discernable. They included those who were adventurers, and the highly ambitious, who had disliked the British aristocratic system *only because they themselves could not be of the upper classes*. Now, they saw the opportunity to make those secret ambitions come true in the new society, to make fortunes for themselves and then gain acceptance in European Society, nestling somewhere only slightly below the aristocracy. The intellectuals, on the other hand, generally had a difficult time making their ideas known and understood by the masses. The manipulators, appealing to the baser instincts of the populace, functioned under no such handicap.

In Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, one can see in broad terms, the two forces, the idealists and the exploiters, that came to prevail in America, and were to dominate the Republic with varying degrees of success over the years, with differences among their ideological heirs more clearly discernable in the latter half of the twentieth century as never before.



It is significant that Jefferson, the idealist and the firm believer in democracy, was himself one of the very few Americans of "upper class" if not aristocratic descent; yet he had chosen, through fierce conviction, to reject all the frills of higher birth. Equally, if not more significant, is the fact that Hamilton, the exploitor, craving a new "aristocratic" society, was the illegitimate son of a West Indian prostitute.

Not all that the founders did can simplistically be called right or wrong; it is the psychological motivating force beneath their views that is significant. A dedicated, strong character like John Adams, could, with the temptation of power, become, at least for a while, vulnerable to Hamilton's ploys. On the other hand, the poorly educated Washington, despite his own weakness for seeking the acceptance of the aristocracy (which undoubtedly helped cement the bond that enabled Hamilton to wield the power he did over Washington) became, with power, strong enough in character to overcome his own deep emotional attachments to England, the home of the woman he loved and lead the battle against the aristocracy he venerated, with a dogged determination when many a more able general would have given up against the odds. The philosopher, Benjamin Franklin, a colorful depraved sensualist, could be a very self-centred being, not quite an idealist or even a humanitarian, yet became a useful, if flamboyant, teacher for the new Republic.

It is important to know some of this motley crew of leaders, as men of flesh and blood, with human weaknesses and shortcomings. Human nature tends to seek to venerate founders — religious or political — as faultless demigods, often as a subconscious excuse to recompense for not following their teachings. Commercial exploitation of an unprecedented magnitude was to make that never more true than in the case of the American founders. And yet it is only when we recognize them as humans, not as demigods without equal, that we derive the most benefit from their contribution: we know that their greatness, if any, can be emulated.

(iii)

A phrase incessantly implanted by commercial media,\* is the "Puritan heritage" of America. The popular movie and TV image of the American Puritans — grave, sober, severely moral and ascetic even stoical — is itself hardly true to facts. Many of the Puritans were no doubt sober and hardworking. But many such as Brook Farm Harmony formed communes for purely monetary gains. While the Puritans were religious, they were not willing to grant freedom of choice to others, as the witch hunts and tortures of dissenters reveal. Many among these groups wore colored cloths and drank liquor. In fact, one of the contemporary journals reveals that the settlers landed at Plymouth Rock because the supply of beer on the ship had been used up. And there were to be the Puritan communes, such as Onieda, in which there were no religious marriages, but freewheeling mate-swapping.

Although the initial revolt against the British began in Boston, most of the American founders were not of the Puritan strain. John Adams was. And while Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston of a poor candle chandler family, his lifestyle, with its many dalliances with prostitutes, his common law of marriage to Deborah, his

\* The term is used throughout this book to include many varieties of books as well as TV, movies, newspapers and magazines whose primary aim is obviously profits or similar material gain.



illegitimate children, his infatuations at seventy with the slovenly Madame Helvetins, his religion (Diest) scarcely coincide with the puritanical image of our times. Franklin did not appeal to some of his contemporaries and to some later biographers. But his wit, homespun wisdom, his colorful irreverence, above all his worldly understanding provided, at times, a useful buffer of pragmatism to the fiery idealism of his younger compatriots in the fight for independence.

Of course the most fictionalized, with misguided patriotism, are the highly distorted commercial versions about the life and nature of George Washington. No doubt, there is always the human tendency to glorify historical figures, but if the true facts about Washington were known and taught, there would be a truly inspirational message that the distorted versions do not provide: that a poorly educated man, with character weaknesses can, under the inspiration of a noble idea, become a strong unyielding force, who can sacrifice his personal yearnings for the common good of society.

Washington had very little schooling. But he was ambitious, and when employed by the Fairfax family, he sought to improve himself. He apparently set rules of behavior for himself, which are highly indicative of the times.\* George Washington became infatuated with Sally Fairfax, the wife of George Fairfax, his employer's son. Sally was apparently willing to be his "patron and instructress in the fine arts of courtesy and good breeding" but nothing more. The situation is fairly obvious from the many letters Washington was to write to her.\*\*

At one point, he was also interested in Sally's sister, Mary Cary, who married another man, Edward Asler, apparently of a higher social level. "In the face of such competition" (writes Rupert Hughes in *George Washington: The Human Being & Hero*) "Washington was a boor".

But it was for Sally Fairfax that he continued to carry the torch throughout his life. Even when he began to woo the wealthy widow Martha Custis, he wrote endearing letters to Sally as well. In 1759, he married Martha, and from all accounts, became a devoted husband and father to her children from her previous marriage.

In 1789, General George Washington (President-elect, and now very literate) wrote to Sally Fairfax, now back in England "... During this period so many important events have occurred... None of which events, however, nor all of them together, have been able to eradicate from my mind the recollection of those happy days, the happiest of my life, which I have enjoyed in your company".

To some of his contemporaries, Washington's military leadership left much to be

\* "When in Company, put not your Hands on any part of the Body not yet Discovered"; "Shew nothing to your Friend that might affright Him; Shift not yourself in the Sight of others nor Gnaw your nails"; "Kill no Vermin as Fleas, lice ticks etc., in the Sight of Others, if you see filth or thick spittle put your feet Dexteriously upon it, if it be upon the Cloths of your Companions, Put it off privately and if it be upon your Cloths return thanks to him who puts it off"; "In Speaking to men of Quality do not lean nor look them full in the Face nor approach too near them at lest keep a full pace from them"; "In Company of these of Higher Quality than yourself speak not ti(!!) you are asked a Question then Stand upright put off your Hat and Answer in few words"; "Being Set at meat Scratch not neither Spit Cough or blow your Nose except there's a Necessity for it"; "Undertake not to help others undesired by ye Master" (*George Washington's Book of Etiquette*, Edited by Evelyn Davis, Beaver Press, 1971).

\*\* "Dear Sally — This comes to Fredericksburg fair in hopes of meeting with a speedy passage to you if your not there which hope you get shortly although I am most discouraged from writing to you as this is my fourth to you since I received any from yourself. I hope you'll not make Old Proverb good out of sight out of Mind as its one of the greatest Pleasures I can yet forsee of having in Fairfax in often hearing from you hope you's not deny it me".

desired and his choice as the first President angered them. John Hancock felt very bitter that his own claim was passed over (the President was selected, not elected). John Adams, in an angry moment, once exclaimed, "Would George Washington have ever been Commander of the Revolutionary Army or President of the United States if he had not married the rich widow of Mr. Custis?". Some biographers have even suggested that he was a heavy drinker, and that he lived off an inflated expense account as President.

Whatever his weaknesses, Washington displayed — especially when the War was going so heavily against the Americans at Valley Forge and French help was delayed — a rare spirit of determination. And that tenacity is all the more remarkable when we consider the frailties in him, his obvious desire to mix with upper-class society, his love of wealth and position, and — most of all — his love for an Englishwoman whose country he was now fighting.

An important and seldom recognized proof of Washington's concern for justice, in arduous and difficult times, was his anger with the Senate when he found, through the report of his Secretary of War Knox, that Indian treaties were being blatantly broken and Indians in large numbers were being killed without compunction as they were heathens, not Christians. Washington went directly to the Senate and argued against such practices; when he found no encouragement in the Senate for his viewpoint, he stormed out, vowing he would never set foot in those Chambers again. He never did.

His Farewell Address to the nation is particularly admirable for this reason too; and, of course, it is an excellent piece of advice which the country could use today, more than ever. It also shows that the retiring Washington, who could have been excused for succumbing to personal sentiments, was somehow bigger than that.

In part, he said, "The nation that indulges towards another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degree a slave... A passionate attachment... produces a variety of evils... and it gives to ambitious corrupt and deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation) facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity, gilding with the appearance of a virtuous sense of obligation". It has been said that he was directing his words to a particular situation; no doubt he was. But these words should ring from every corridor of the White House, the Senate and the House, each day, in our times...

What is important to remember is that this frail old man was speaking in the pure interests of the new Republic, against passionate attachments to France or England, the country of his birth and the home of the woman he apparently loved almost all through his life.

In examining the founders, however, there are two — Hamilton and Jefferson — at whom we must look a little more closely, to try and understand the men and their objectives in the new Republic, not because their views differed on matters such as the power of the central government (which led to the two-party system), because this was almost incidental and clearly "period", with circumstances very different from the future. What is important is that their characters represented the two axis, in effect, the prototypes of two views of what a free society and democracy were to be.

More than a century after Alexander Hamilton, President Woodrow Wilson was to call him "A very great man, but not a great American". In more recent times (for reasons that will be more apparent later) Hamilton has perhaps enjoyed more popularity and adulation among many Americans than he ever had in his own time —



certainly after those around him had cause to know him well. Once disillusioned, John Adams was to remark to his wife Abigail that he knew Hamilton to be a "conceited, aspiring mortal, always pretending to morality... As great an hypocrite as any in the U.S.". This was not news to Abigail. From the start, even when Adams himself was under Hamilton's influence, she had warned him often. "Beware that sparse Cassius" she once said, "I have read his heart in his wicked eyes many a time. The very devil is in them".

Alexander Hamilton was an illegitimate child of Rachael, a West Indian prostitute or woman of "low morals". Born and raised in poverty and degradation, perhaps his greatest claim to fame was that he used his intelligence and talents to raise himself out of the squalor to become one of the most prominent men in the new American Republic. His tragedy — which in fact was to be the prototype, the mould of America's tragedy in the years to come, — that he did not know how to curb his fierce ambition for power and his thirst to nestle, by any means, among the "upper classes". He sometimes used the concept of democracy and freedom shamelessly for these ends.

Washington took to Hamilton in a big way. According to some sources Hamilton did not only write Washington's speeches, he often told him what to expound. After marriage to Elizabeth, Hamilton now had the social position and influence of his father-in-law to seek the post of Superintendent of Finance. He did not, however, get the position and that made him furious with Washington. He wrote to his father-in-law "Three years past, I have felt no friendship for him [Washington] and have professed none". And he wrote to his friend James McHenry "Proposals have been made on his [Washington's] part but rejected [by me]. I pledge my honour to you that he will find me inflexible. He shall for once at least repent his ill-humour". He went on to resign his army post despite efforts by Washington and Schuyler to heal the breach. However, aware of Washington's extreme desire for reconciliation, "inflexible" Hamilton used the situation now to ask for a military command for himself, before his resignation was to take effect. Washington knew of the just claims to such commands of men far more experienced and senior, but he was apparently keen to effect a reconciliation with Hamilton at any cost, and agreed.\*

Hamilton was elected a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1782. It is significant that during the Revolutionary War, when things had been going very badly for the Colonies before French help arrived, Hamilton wrote his wife Elizabeth "What have we to do with anything but love? ... If America were lost, we should be happy in other climes ... What think you of Geneva as a retreat? 'Tis a charming place".

With Washington as President, Hamilton was made Secretary of the Treasury and Washington's chief adviser. In this capacity Hamilton had begun speculative schemes with bank scrips for the Bank of United States that he created. He originated the idea of deficit spending. In the wild speculations of stocks and certificates, and in subsequent ventures into bank scrips, Hamilton chose as his closest aides William Duer and Andrew Craigie, the former a notorious con artist. Hamilton's father-in-law Schuyler and brother-in-law John Barker Church were later found to have profited heavily, along with some friends, reportedly from secret knowledge of Hamilton's

\* Gerthruide Atherton in *Adventures of a Novelist* suggests Washington as the possible father of Hamilton; in her research she believes that Washington was in Barbados when Rachel, Hamilton's mother was "active" there. The time of Hamilton's presumed birth however does not match with that of Washington's visit to Barbados according to other historians like Prof. Tansill.



reports. James Jackson said in Congress: "Since this [Hamilton] report has been read in the House, a spirit of havoc, speculation and ruin has arisen and been cherished by people who have an access to the information the report contained". And the *Boston Columbian Centinel* reported (August 13, 1791) "The Speculation Mania which now rages in the United States for Bank Stock is unequalled by anything ancient or modern except the South Sea or Mississippi schemes".

Thomas Jefferson had opposed the creation of the Bank, labelling it unconstitutional. But he had been unable to keep Washington from signing the Bank into being which the latter did on Feb 25, 1791. The wild speculation infuriated Jefferson now: "Ships are lying at the wharves, buildings are stopped, capitals withdrawn from commerce, manufacture arts and agriculture to be employed in gambling".

The crash came on August 15 and 16, 1791. Many were ruined. Hamilton's co-author in the schemes, William Duer, was jailed. But the Bank was allowed to linger until the presidency of Andrew Jackson.

"It is much to Hamilton's discredit that behind the back of [Thomas] Jefferson, Secretary of State in Washington's first Cabinet, he [Hamilton] carried on diplomatic intrigues that severely injured American interests" writes Prof. Tansil (*Love Lives of the Founding Fathers*).

In the matter of the John Jay Treaty, Hamilton once again disclosed secrets to British Minister Hammond, (as he had before to Britain's Major Beckwith) which undermined U.S.'s strength in its relations with the British. Prof. Dice Anderson (*Edmund Randolph*) remarks, "As Hamilton had attempted to overreach Jefferson, and was overreaching Randolph, so he succeeded in overreaching Jay and the interests of his country". There were to be other such instances of treachery.

During the presidency of John Adams, Hamilton was to become, for a while, more powerful than ever before. Adams' Cabinet were devoted allies of Hamilton. Making the most of a friction between Adams and France's Talleyrand, Hamilton — always opposed to friendly relations with revolutionary France — saw in this friction the opportunity of war and personal advancement. He spearheaded a move for war with France, and simultaneously sought to be made second-in-command to the retired Washington in the impending action.

Consulted on this appointment, George Washington, mindful of Hamilton's past anger at being thwarted, quickly agreed. Due to Washington's age, this would in effect have made Hamilton Commander-in-Chief in the war, if there was one. The war, however, never materialized and apparently Hamilton never forgave Adams for this. Hamilton wrote pamphlets and said Adams was a man of "disgusting egotism, distempered jealousy, and ungovernable indiscretions". There were "great and intrinsic defects in his [Adam's] character which unfit him for the office of Chief Magistrate".

Hamilton came to America with the sponsorship of Hugh Knox, a missionary. Intelligent and attractive in appearance, his ambition to uplift himself into the society of the rich and the powerful was soon obvious; he wooed and married Elizabeth, daughter of General Schuyler, a prominent and influential New York land owner, an alliance that helped him greatly as he worked himself up in the Continental army and into George Washington's favor. But while he assured Elizabeth of his undying love, his activities with other women are too well recorded and too numerous to have been mere gossip — one in particular, that with Mrs. Reynolds, was highly publicised even at the time, as it involved security risks and alleged payments to her husband to let the affair continue.

The hatred that developed between Hamilton and Aaron Burr — which was to lead to Hamilton's death — was perhaps a natural outcome of their similar natures. Both were consumed with a thirst for personal fame and fortune. To both, the concept of democracy was academic, as much as the belief that "all men are created equal". They saw these as political ploys and refused to believe that anyone would see them differently. Those who fiercely claimed to believe in such concepts — like Jefferson — were labelled hypocrites.

Hamilton could play the game of winning over the powerful much better than Burr could. The latter, aside from his intrigue, could be disarmingly honest and speak his mind, a fact which made him enemies. Both were, of course, considerably above most of their peers in literacy and intelligence. Both were by nature unscrupulous. Both fancied themselves as ladies' men, though both had a somewhat degenerate taste in women and — some claim — in men and boys too. In fact Hamilton saw himself as Kingmaker, and at least harbored ambitions of being ruler of the newer colonies. And Burr, had he been totally innocent of desires to set himself up as King of a divided America, would hardly have undertaken to seek to create revolt in Kentucky, Ohio and Tennessee with the aid of Andrew Jackson (later President) merely to do what he had been accused of trying to do.

Natures as similar can be very close friends, but, when they fall out, the bitterest of enemies too. In the presidential elections that were to follow, Hamilton's hate for Burr was greater than his perennial hate for Jefferson. The two-party system had now been born (it had not existed from the start of the new Republic) mainly out of ideological differences that existed between Jefferson and Hamilton. Jefferson's party was the Republican (present-day Democrats) while Hamilton's was Federalist (later the inspiration for present-day *Republican Party*). In the Presidential elections of 1801, Hamilton neutralized the influence that Burr had among the Federalists, stating that Burr's "character is not defended by his most partial friends. He is bankrupt beyond redemption except by the plunder of his country". Certainly Hamilton's vituperations against Burr did not harm Jefferson in his narrow victory to the presidency.

Slandorous remarks by Hamilton against Burr at a dinner party (reportedly suggesting an incestuous relationship between Burr and his daughter) were communicated to Burr. Burr challenged Hamilton to a gun duel. Hamilton's note claimed he would not shoot first. Burr's second claimed that Hamilton did. Hamilton was killed. Burr, aside from his efforts at insurrection, was to fade away from the scene.

In Hamilton one can see a very bright and capable man for whom the times perhaps offered too much temptation for personal glory. His early hardships may have made him that way. Perhaps he saw those early hardships as the excuse, the crutch that provided him with the right to exploit people and situations for his personal ambitions. He was convinced that the best use of intelligence was in machiavellian cunning.

Certainly the pattern did not die with him. It has recurred frequently over the years, far more in the twentieth century than ever before. It can be described as the great American tragedy.

And then there was Jefferson. "Let me describe to you a man" wrote the Marquise de Chastellux (*Travels in North America*, Dublin, 1787) "not yet forty ... An American, who without ever having quitted his country, is at once a musician, skilled in drawing, a geometrician, an astronomer, a natural philosopher, legislator

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and statesman... a mild and amiable wife, charming children... a house to embellish the arts and sciences to cultivate ... these are what remain to Mr. Jefferson after having played a principal character in the theatre of the New World".

Thomas Jefferson was a founder of America who could in fact be considered of aristocratic descent (on his mother's side), an "honor" which he rejected on principle.

In 1772, Jefferson married Martha Shelton, a beautiful and talented twenty-three year old widow, daughter of John Wayles, a plantation owner. Intelligent, well-read, gifted musicians, they had a lot in common. A year later, though newly married, he took on more responsibilities; his brother-in-law died and Jefferson took his widowed sister and her six children under his care. Soon his political idealism was to become known especially after *A Summary View Of British America*, his advice to the Virginian delegates to the Continental Congress. It became widely popular and was printed and reprinted in America and England. It was to lead to the obvious choice of Jefferson to draft the Declaration of Independence.

Political obligations, however, were clashing with the disturbances in the home life of Thomas Jefferson. It is obvious which he considered more important — political ambition or his family — when in 1782 Martha became seriously ill after the delivery of their second daughter; Jefferson immediately resigned from the Virginia House of Delegates, without revealing the reason for his resignation (and thereby inviting more criticism from those who did not know of his domestic worries). Martha's condition grew worse over the next five months, during which time Jefferson hovered at her bedside. She died September 6, 1782.

Jefferson was now keen to get away from the memories of Monticello, the house he had lovingly designed, with its many gadgetries. Congress offered him the commission to negotiate the peace treaty with England, but before he could get himself together and sail, the treaty was signed. He was elected to Congress in 1783 and the following year appointed Minister to France. In Paris, having installed his eldest daughter Martha at a convent school he began to attend to his official duties and pick up the threads of his personal life. Speaking fluent French (he was well-versed in Italian and Latin too), impeccably dressed and with his knowledge and interests in art, music, and subjects as varied as architecture to botany and zoology, he was quickly and warmly received by the French intelligensia. He met Maria Cosway (nee Hartfield), born in Florence, Italy, and married to Richard Cosway, a prominent portrait artist in London. Maria herself combined great beauty and charm with unusual artistic talent of her own and had been elected to the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence at the age of nineteen. She too was a gifted musician, a harpist. Jefferson and Maria spent a good deal of time together when she visited Paris thereafter and corresponded when she was in England.

The relationship between Maria and Jefferson endured over the years, though punctuated with hurt and neglect on both sides, at intervals. She was very keen to visit Jefferson in America when he returned but it was not to be. In 1823, she wrote to him expressing again her desire to watch the development of Jefferson's University of Virginia: "I wish I could come and learn from you" she wrote. His lifelong involvement with teaching had inspired her to start a school for girls at Lodi, Italy. Jefferson died without responding to her last letter. His last years had been spent totally involved in his children, with Monticello and the University. The capital city of Washington that he helped plan and design so eagerly had been a bitter disappointment to him, a hotbed of intrigue in which he had come to participate and fair poorly. It was the one talent he did not have.



There were no doubt weaknesses in his character that his detractors (significantly, a growing lot in our time) are apt to point. He evidently did keep Sally Jennings, his mulatto slave, as a mistress. And while he often spoke out against the institution of slavery (among the words deleted from his draft of the Declaration Of Independence by other founders was his accusation of the slave traders), he did not free all his own slaves. Could he have, without drawing even more bitter wrath from his enemies? An intellectual idealist and multi-talented one at that, had, perhaps to be scorned and labelled a hypocrite by the standards of the majority. His temper sometimes caused him to make rash statements, which his enemies could use to their advantage, even when he was right; in Burr's impeachment trial, Burr did just that, aided substantially by the animosity that Chief Justice John Marshall had towards President Jefferson, in that strange preliminary hearing in the barroom that served as the makeshift Supreme Court of the U.S.A.

It is remarkable, that so much of what Jefferson said is applicable today, perhaps at least as much — if not more — than in his own times. "I know but one code of morality for men, whether acting singly or collectively" he wrote. Some of what he propagated was obviously more suited for his times, such as the establishment of a mainly agricultural society, with decentralized power and autonomy for each state. But he also insisted that the Constitution should allow for changes that could be made by future generations, to suit their times. And while he stood for a decentralized government, with power in the hands of the people, which may seem unrealistic in a time when the masses were almost totally illiterate and mainly the submerged feudal class, he worked for and laid the foundation for what he believed was the imperative need in democracy — a truly free responsible press and an informed and educated public. It was not from lack of effort on his part that the power to inform and educate the public was to become so thoroughly abused in later years.

(iv)

When Washington became President, an era of pomp and pageantry began to rear its head, even though he himself was not as thrilled by these trends, as his wife Martha appears to have been. John Adams, as Vice-President under Washington and later as President, was himself quite smitten with the novel sensations of power. An able and conscientious man otherwise, he yearned for titles. There was criticism towards his vanities and some ridicule. Senator Izard referred to the stout Adams as "His Rotundity" and Senator William Grayson of Virginia commented, "Is it not strange that monarchy should issue from the East? Is it not stranger that Adams, the son of a tinker and the creature of the people should be for titles and dignities and pre-eminence and should despise the herd and the ill-born?"

The Bill of Rights had enacted freedom of speech, of press, of assemblage and petition. Jefferson, in France as Minister at the time, was relieved but felt two additional rights had been overlooked — the right to personal safeguards against possible federal tyranny, and protection against repeated re-election of a President. Party rivalry was, however, to cause some blatant violations of the Bill of Rights themselves. Newspapers were mainly Federalists but there were a few Republicans too. "Most items were partisan in character and editorially inspired. The truth was not in them, unless it fitted with the preconceived political slants. The general stock in trade was epithets, abuse, violent reiteration of charges, attacks and more attacks"

writes Mr. Schachner (*The Founding Fathers*). A typical leading newspaper was *The Porcupine Gazette*. William Corbett, an Englishman, had come to the U.S. and started the paper. He had offered his paper's backing to Jefferson who refused it. Corbett then became a fiery opponent of Jefferson and an ardent supporter of Hamilton. He enjoyed considerable power for some years. It was then discovered that he was a fugitive from justice in England and he was promptly extradited.

While the Republicans had a few newspapers, the Federalists had by far the majority. An ugly decision to suffocate competition was made under Adams in the guise of the Alien & Sedition Act. Opponents could be summarily jailed under its provisions, as was Judge Samuel Chase (later released during the presidency of Jefferson). Congressman Matthew Lyons accused Adams of "a continuous grasp and unbounded thirst for ridiculous pomp, foolish adulation and selfish service" and was also promptly jailed.

On Jefferson's election to the presidency, Adams, who had wanted to be re-elected, refused to attend the inauguration. Jefferson attempted to heal the breach with the Federalists ("We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists" he said at his inauguration), but at least some enemies among the Federalists began a campaign against him almost as soon as he was elected.

In these early years of the new Democratic Experiment, the glories and the dangers of a free society were already beginning to become apparent. No one is always infallible and no one is always wrong. Adam's obsession with position may seem trite and even contemptible in a new democracy, but it becomes understandable if we consider that this able man, strong in character, educated and truly dedicated to the nation's interests, felt he should be granted a high position of honor in a society which was quite primitive. Jefferson's passion for a people's society with the least government control was an ideal but that ideal could only be achieved with a well-educated society for which he worked all his life. However, as things were, whatever his personal motives, Hamilton's contention that the masses ("the great beast") needed Federal control was a practical reality. Certainly the nation would not have expanded to its subsequent size without the power of the Federal Government. To Jefferson, however, that expansion was unnecessary unless it came about in a normal manner. His Louisiana purchase doubled the size of the United States, but it was achieved by peaceful means — a bargain purchase from France. A great deal of the fabulous wealth discovered underground would have remained with the Indians, had the strong centralized government of the United States not permitted inroads into Indian territories as they were to do soon after. Without the power vested in the Federal Government, America would not have grown and become so rich — certainly the Indians would not have been exterminated so fast. Factions and even states may have achieved that eventually, but on the other hand, they may not have. Certainly the conquest of Florida, Texas, New Mexico, California from the Spanish and Mexican Governments would have been very hard if not possible. To those who may believe that the America's greatness resulted from this expansion — and consequent acquisition of treasures from those conquered lands — having a strong centralized government certainly helped.

Once aware of the bad influence of Hamilton, Adams was to become himself again. Aided largely by his remarkable wife, Abigail, Adams was to resume his old friendship with Jefferson, when the two retired away from politics to their mutual homes — Adams to his farm, Braintree, in New England, and Jefferson to his beloved Monticello, in Virginia. The two corresponded and shared concerns with the trends

and corruption that was taking hold in the new capital of Washington, the little town Jefferson had helped design, and where he had been the first President to be inaugurated. Jefferson was the more philosophical and hopeful that future generations would properly complete the great revolution that the founders had commenced. "The generation that commences a revolution seldom completes it" he wrote to Adams in 1823. By a remarkable and fitting coincidence, both men died on July 4, 1826. Jefferson's last words were, reportedly, "Is it really the fourth?" Adams, according to some reports breathed his last with the words "Thomas Jefferson lives!".



### 3

## *Prosperity and Social Conflict*

(i)

**B**ack in Washington, wild upheavals were taking place. Jefferson had been a very popular President for both his terms until he initiated the Embargo Act, after American ships were being seized by both France and Britain. Tradesmen resented that restriction on business. But it was soon found, even with the repeal of that Embargo, under President Madison, that American ships continued to be seized. American attempts to make Canada join the United States made matters worse between the United States and Britain. It all culminated in the War of 1812. The British were quite aggressive in this War; they laid siege on the new city of Washington and burnt the President's House,\* (causing President Madison to ignominiously dash to safety across the Potomac into Virginia). The presidency of James Monroe produced the Monroe Doctrine, intended to safeguard the Americas from European powers. It said that North and South America was under the sole sovereignty of its own inhabitants (a concept that was to be shamelessly misused in later years). John Adams' son, John Quincy Adams, became President under some loud accusations of wheeling and dealing. For the first time, the people had been permitted to vote to elect a President (though subject to electoral college votes) and while Andrew Jackson had received the majority of votes, John Quincy was elected President by obtaining Henry Clay's electoral votes. Clay was made Secretary of State. Adams placated Andrew Jackson as well by backing him fully as that fiery frontiersman disseminated Indian tribes and rampaged into Florida.

Jackson was very popular with the masses, since his performance as a fighter in the War of 1812. With people now permitted to vote for the presidency (they had of course to qualify to become voters), mass appeal added its own virtues and dangers to the election of a President. In Jackson's case, the dangers were easily apparent. His rough, manly qualities, even his illiteracy had a special appeal for the masses, who identified with the frontiersman. In 1829, he was elected President. He was to learn to read and write only after becoming President. He ruled, at best, shakily. His "Kitchen Cabinet" consisted of unofficial advisers on whom he relied greatly. Hamilton's infamous Federal Banks were closed but Jackson's sponsorship of State Banks unintentionally caused yet another epidemic of speculations. It all led to the Panic of 1837, the second of America's major financial crisis.

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\* The house had no name as yet — and was to be known as the President's House or Place until the 20th Century, when Teddy Roosevelt had it painted white.

But the momentum of growth continued. There was a practical need for more land, because the population grew steadily and the American farmer was far from efficient. "Foreign observers were constantly amazed at the agricultural ignorance of the Americans" writes Mr. Schachner. An Englishman, Isaac Weld (*Travels through the States of North America*), called them "slovenly" and estimated that a British farmer could produce at least four times as much as an American. A French traveller of the time (Rochefoucauld-Liancourt) claimed that American farmers did not seem to know basic procedures which in Europe were considered the ABC of husbandry.

But of course, the desire for more land was for other reasons. The land was known to be rich and possibly full of treasures, as the early Spanish explorers had found. There were many ambitious adventurers who wanted that. And the extermination of Indians provided many rationales. As Secretary of War, Knox had admitted in his report to George Washington, by the practised standards it "is not [considered] the same crime in killing an Indian [as killing a Christian]". The Indians were pagans, not Christians. And while many of them had been very friendly and hospitable to the early immigrants some of the tribes had become violently hostile in defense of what they considered their homeland. The fear of the "primitive" Indians made it easy to see them as less than human, especially when the prize was the conquest of their lands.

(ii)

The Louisiana purchase, Florida invasions, and driving the Indians away as the immigrants moved westwards had all increased the size of the United States substantially. Now in 1845 Texas was taken from Mexico. In 1848, after fighting neighboring Mexico, California, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico were also acquired and America had grown from one ocean to the other, or, as the song was later to say, "from sea to shiny sea". Periodically, moral conscience took charge and treaties were made with the surviving Indians, granting them some lands and other rights. Periodically, many of these treaties were broken, often without even the pretence of justification.

For Americans, this growth was almost immediately accompanied with riches beyond their wildest dreams. Gold was found in California and in 1849 commenced the mad Gold Rush to the West and more massacre of the Indians. Oil was drilled in 1859, first in Pennsylvania, and soon found in great abundance in Texas, Oklahoma and California. The laying of a rail link from Omaha, Nebraska to Sacramento, California joined the West Coast to the East, and itself created "barons" out of the contractors, who often chose to add to their take by the simple practice of not paying the mainly Chinese laborers. Frontiersmen, "lumber kings" and "cattle barons" came into being. Prostitution, gambling and plain banditry were also creating many millionaires in the New West. Law and Right belonged in the hands of those who were the quickest with guns. And while all this was going on, the free labor on Southern plantations was producing its own millionaires, and in the East, speculation and commerce in the new mineral wealth was soon to make some new fortunes at the expense of many thousands of speculators. Foreign trade promotion took on a new meaning in 1854, when Commodore Perry blockaded Japanese ports and insisted on trade (or else).

The burst of prosperity required more laborers. Incentives were now being

offered to lure European labor to come, such as a \$25 fare which included sea passage and free rail transport to the Midwest. The Irish potato famine had let loose millions more peasants on the U.S.. Immigration boomed, as stories of overnight fortunes circulated among the European masses.

But if there were hysterical masses hitting the Western Trail, there were also others moving West and from Europe to America, merely because they were seeking a better, fresher, and unencumbered life for themselves and their children in a New World. It was out of this other America that the American founding principles were kept alive, even refined to suit the times. This other America with true grassroots principles belonged to no special group. They included some of those born in the East and the South, some who had migrated from the Old World, some who had or were moving West. They saw the opportunities of the New Society but also the responsibilities of the new freedom and prosperity for the nation of the world's poor.

There were many among this other America who lived by the American principles but chose principally to focus their attention on survival and betterment of themselves and their own families. A few felt that was not enough, however, that they had the obligation to be concerned about the society and the directions in which it was proceeding. Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), the philosopher, naturalist and man of letters chose to make a "radical" of himself. He chose to be jailed by refusing to pay the Poll tax (a tax that voters had to pay to become "eligible"); he felt it was "time for honest men to rebel and revolutionize when a sixth of the population of a nation which undertakes to be the refuge of liberty, are slaves and a whole country that was Mexico is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army" (referring to the conquest of what was now Western America). There were fiery extremists as well, such as John Brown, a white, who even killed in the cause of abolishing slavery "by authority of Almighty God". He was hanged in 1859. But the fight against slavery did not die with him.

### (iii)

Slavery had been made illegal in the North by the middle of the nineteenth century. But for the South, it had become an essential institution since the time it was made hereditary in Virginia in 1662. The Southern lifestyle and prosperity was based on it. There had been a few slaves who had attempted to lead insurrections or flights to freedom, but for the most part, the slaves were so conditioned that they had come to expect their status as normal and just. Some even saw the movement of claiming equality with whites as evil. To white Southerners, abolitionists were the mischief-makers, who were attempting to force the South to economic disaster when the slaves themselves were quite content with their lot. The South felt its freedom was endangered by this invasion of Northern beliefs on freedom of choice. It was to be the first major test of a complex but critical issue of individual freedom, and democracy.

"We hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable [later changed to "self-evident"] that all men are created equal" said the American Declaration of Independence, drafted by Thomas Jefferson. To the American masses, freed from the bondage of their servitude as the lower class of Europe, it was a dream come true, a dream they and their forefathers had yearned for generations in Europe. But for many it was to become a dream to raise themselves from the lower to the "upper class". Those who had become rich in America saw themselves now as the upper class. And



the many others still struggling to become economically prosperous keenly felt the need for ego gratification as a result in claiming racial, religious and national superiority. The perennial desire of the poor to seek ego gratification from racial and nationalistic pride operated in America, despite its "democracy" as it always had around the world and through the ages among feudal societies.

It was in this milieu that Abraham Lincoln proclaimed his determination to end slavery. Born in a Kentucky log cabin in 1809, he was mainly self-schooled, became a lawyer, and was candidate for the Senate in 1858. Politics by now had already become a profession for the idealistic as well as the exploiters. The latter used all the rabble-rousing techniques available, and the techniques worked. To the carnival-style hoopla that political campaigning had by now usually consisted of, Lincoln and his opponent Stephen Douglas, introduced a healthy innovation — a series of open debates in public more organized than before. It was during these debates that Lincoln expounded his convictions against slavery, and caused considerable commotions among his audiences by proclaiming that by "All men are created equal" the founders had meant not only Catholics and foreigners but "negroes" as well. Lincoln made it clear however that he did not mean that "negroes" when freed needed to be integrated into white society. They could be separate but equal.

A man of unusual moral strength and principles, Lincoln created as many admirers as enemies. At one stage during his campaigning, he was so disgusted at what he considered general hypocrisy and deceit, that he exclaimed it might be better to live in the obvious evils of Czarist Russia than in the hypocritical morality of America. Lincoln lost the Senate election, but among the moral and the idealist he had won many hearts. Political game-players joined in, and Lincoln was wooed by the new Republican party as its presidential candidate for 1860, and he won the office narrowly.

Abraham Lincoln was then the first Republican President of the "new" Republican Party. If that is confusing it needs to be noted again that Jefferson's Republican Party was now called the Democratic Party. What was hereafter to be called the Republican Party was an offshoot of the Federalist Party, created in 1856.

In the election of Lincoln to the presidency, there is tangible proof that despite the exploitative and the superficial that prevailed, the founding principles of America were alive and well. Lincoln himself illustrated a classic example of the real American founding idealists like Jefferson had dreamed of — a poor man, who had thirsted for education and obtained it on his own, a man of strong moral principles and ideals, a product of a log cabin but a gentleman in the real sense of the word. Not all the influences of society of the times however helped in the flowering of a nature's gentleman. This man of strong principles for instance could be made to feel embarrassed of his origins and rough deportment — reportedly even to find excuses in order not to attend his father's funeral for this reason.

On the issues of abolishing slavery, however, he stood firm, despite considerable pressures from within his own political allies. The issue of freedom of choice in a democracy was at stake, according to Southerners. They had the right to decide what was right for them. Lincoln and his supporters argued that freedom to practice evil was not a justifiable right. The existence of national unity required that the Federal government have the power to legislate over the States. Ironically, from Hamilton's call for a strong centralized government had now come its use on an issue he would himself have abhorred.

Feelings ran passionately high. The South seceded from the Union, and

proclaimed Jefferson Davis as its own President. Lincoln and the Union Government ruled that the secession was illegal, unconstitutional, and the Civil War (or The War Between The States) followed.

It took four years of bloody fighting and a considerable amount of agony before the South surrendered in 1865. Lincoln had been re-elected. While millions had suffered through the War years, few had agonized over it as much as Lincoln himself. The end of the War was a great relief to the President — but he was not to live to reconstruct as he had dreamt. Just a few nights later, at Ford's Theatre, he was shot and killed. He was one of several Presidents on whom assassination attempts were to be made and the first of four Presidents to be killed in office. Several earlier plots against him had failed — at least two to kidnap him and one to assassinate him. Boothe, who killed him, apparently did not work alone. Leads to his associates and mentors tended to disappear, including 18 pages of critical information from Boothe's diary. Consequently those involved went unpunished and were later even rewarded as power shifted.

Over 1,000,000 Americans had died in the War, and in one way or another, almost all Americans had been touched personally by the tragedies. There were several reasons for the War and its persistence — to the South, economically shattered and humbled, one primary reason was the jealousy of the North — but it was Lincoln's moral leadership and genuine belief in the cause that inspired many of the Unionists, even as it caused chagrin in many of his own Party. The power-brokers of the new Republican Party had initially selected Lincoln as their candidate because the "country bumpkin" with his grass roots morality and homespun humor seemed to appeal to a large segment of the electorate. But the country bumpkin had turned out to be his own man; the ungainly outercrust housed a rare nobility and force of character that they had not bargained for.

At Gettysburg, Lincoln predicted — inaccurately — that "the world will little note nor long remember what we say here". It was a speech that was to be among the best known and inspiring of any in world history. "Let us hereby resolve that the dead shall not have died in vain" he said towards the end of that address, and while he was not to live to see it, Reconstruction began and eventually, the Union became one again. Bitterness was to persist in the South; it was in some ways, understandable. Contrary to the image projected since, only a few Southerners had actually lived the "graceful" life in mansions. The rest had been poor, uneducated and poverty was to be aggravated by the bloody War; poverty in the South was to remain widespread into the twentieth century.

To many idealists and downtrodden around the world, the American Civil War was another milestone of the moral principles underlying the turbulent new nation. The obvious sincerity of Abraham Lincoln won great admiration, especially in contrast to the excesses that some of the Old World leaderships practiced. Queen Victoria had recently been crowned Empress of India, completing the confidence game begun a century before by the East India Company. The Mogul Emperor was toppled and imprisoned for life, while the British wiped off what was to be known contemptuously in English history books as the "Sepoy Mutiny". Napoleon, risen to power as the leader of the people had set about carving a dynasty. Now his grandnephew Napoleon III, had become Emperor and Dictator of France, hardly the freedom that the raging masses had sought in the French Revolution. Nicholas I of Russia's aggressive expansionism had collided with that of the British in the Crimean War. Isabella II still ruled Spain only because her father had decided she should.

## *Victorious Capitalism*

● ... (i)

**T**he new Republican Party power bloc was not united. After Lincoln, the extremists of his party strongly opposed Lincoln's humanistic Reconstruction plans which Vice President Andrew Johnson (now President) proceeded to implement in memory of the slain President. But they were determined to have things their own way after Johnson, and they did. They picked Ulysses Grant, former door-to-door salesman and then the hero General of the Civil War as their candidate, convinced that he would do things their way. He was a War Hero but in the elections, they took no chances; for instance, 7,000,000 newly freed and registered "negroes" were bundled over to vote for Grant in seven reconstructed Southern states. Unwittingly the grateful blacks did what they thought was right for Mr. Lincoln's memory and Grant won narrowly.

Under Grant's administration, corruption and exploitation reigned supreme. The infamous Boss Tweed with powerful legislative and Tammany Hall connections in New York reportedly made \$10,000,000 through public construction schemes alone. Fraudulent get-rich-quick schemes mushroomed all over. Men such as Jay Gould and Jim Frisk made millions out of worthless stocks on the Stock Exchange. An amount in excess of \$350,000,000 of legal tender notes ("greenbacks") were still in circulation and moves to inflate the currency and "buy up" the Gold Reserve led to the panic of Black Friday bringing the nation to another financial crisis in 1873.

Strange and shocking practices were slowly being uncovered in Washington despite President Grant's efforts to silence all investigations. Grant's own legislative efforts were hardly commendable. An Act of 1871 attempted to abolish in one stroke all treaty commitments to the Indians who survived. In 1873, the "Salary Grab Bill" raised salaries of top federal officials astronomically, doubling Grant's own salary from \$25,000 to \$50,000. Some of Grant's Cabinet Ministers and his own personal Secretary were soon under investigations for bribery and corruption. Grant saved his Secretary by having him resign, then appointed him to another federal position. He could not, however, save his Cabinet Ministers and other old cronies, some of whom either resigned in a hurry or were indicted and convicted. General McDonald, an old friend of Grant, was found heavily involved in the notorious Whiskey Ring scandals. Grant himself escaped any investigation because it was generally believed that he was duped rather than a party to the corruption.

Republican hold on the freed slaves again helped in making the 1876 Presidential elections a close one. But Tilden, the wealthy and — reportedly — incorruptible



Democratic nominee was in fact the winner over Republican Rutherford Hayes (another "Civil War Hero"). But in South Carolina, Florida and Louisiana, Republican office-holders managed to change the voting returns. Southern Democrats were won over with promises of greater local freedom. More wheeling and dealing provided the necessary reversal. Tilden had won these three states but now enough votes were "invalidated" so that the returns were reversed and Hayes was awarded these States. Consequently, the election was declared deadlocked (equal votes for both candidates). More wheeling and dealing provided an 8-7 victory for Hayes in the Congress. Within the Republican Party itself, the corrupt practices had by now caused a split. The pro-Grant forces, who had achieved Hayes' victory called themselves "Stalwarts" and contemptuously called the Liberal Republicans "half breeds" or Mugwumps. The "Stalwarts" had won the day then and now, and it was to set the Republican Party course for the future. They were to label themselves the Grand Old Party (GOP), in future years, for no justifiable reason except that it sounded traditional.

Meanwhile, there had been more to celebrate than the victory of Hayes to the presidency. The country roads of Washington were cleaned of cattle dung and debris and the public buildings of tobacco spit stains. Prostitutes lodging around the White House were forced to move by the army, led by General Hooker. New York, Boston, Richmond and Philadelphia had similarly been given a wash and taken on a festive appearance for big celebrations.

It was 1876, the American Centennial.

(ii)

Prior to the Civil War, political campaign financing costs had been moderate as had the dimensions of politicking. Ties between commercial interests, the rich and the politicians had existed but loosely and periodically. Corruption had prevailed but on a simple and disorganised fashion. There had been, of course, even when George Washington ran for the Virginia Assembly, the "customary means" of winning votes namely 28 gallons of rum, 50 gallons of rum punch, 38 gallons of wine, 46 gallons of beer and 2 gallons of cider royal. The 1828 Presidential election which brought frontiersman Andrew Jackson into the White House, was the first election in which the average citizen swung the vote (with proper qualifications of course). But it also marked the time that "professionals" i.e., those who were considered able at gathering voters for the candidates, were employed and paid for their services. Usually this took the simple yet effective form of handing money to voters, or providing drinks as one roped them to the voting centers to cast their ballots, once, or even twice or three times if one could get away with it. In 1847, Edgar Allan Poe, the writer, is reported to have died from alcoholism, four days after an election in Baltimore when he received payment for his vote which he used to buy — and drink — a great deal of liquor.

The campaign of Ulysses Grant for President, however, established alliance between rich businessmen and politicians, that was to grow into a tradition. After Abraham Lincoln, the trend of the Republican Party in particular had begun a skew that was to change the course of history and national priorities, imperceptibly at first but with increasing abandon in the years to come. Grant's campaign of 1868 and 1872 were each officially estimated to have cost \$2,000,000, an astronomical and

unprecedented amount for the time. "It has subsequently been said of Grant that seldom has a President labored under such heavy obligations to so few men of wealth" writes Mr. George Thayer in *Who Shakes The Money Tree?* (Simon & Schuster, 1973). The Vanderbilts, Astors, railroad and government contractors, businessmen who had made it rich during the war and in trade with the Indians, all contributed heavily, some, such as Jay Cooke, gave as much as \$50,000. Corruption among Democrats especially at state and local levels was also to grow with equal abandon. Attempting to control corruption through "compromise", President James Garfield, elected 1880, got himself shot dead in 1881.

Industrialization came to America almost fifty years after Europe, but a few men of ambition, drive and determination had made up for the lost time, and emerged with huge fortunes. To many of these new millionaires, one thing was more important than anything else: to keep the government from taking any of their money by way of taxes, and to keep it from formulating laws that would hamper them from getting richer. Many of these Americans, were riddled with frustrations. Money had not been able to gain entry in the highest social strata of Europe, sometimes not even into the very small but fiercely guarded groups in America. Already, groups such as the Daughters of The American Revolution had set up an American version of lineage. New England and Southern societies were beginning to claim their own superiorities. Outward manifestations of culture and wealth provided considerable satisfaction, but deep within, the frustrations grew, and to many of the self-made millionaires, the only solace was in seeking additional millions. To this end politicians were bought; however, there was an additional danger now to the men of business and industry: foreign competition. It had to be kept away, while foreign markets had to be taken.

Buying politicians or having one of one's own men elected, was made much easier because corruption was contagious. Everyone yearned to be rich, if not from fortunes in the Wild West or industry, then by any means. These decades were to be, what Mr. Thayer calls, 'the golden age of boodle'. "No office was too high to purchase, no man too pure to bribe, no principle too sacred to destroy, no law too fundamental to break ... in Henry Adam's words 'The moral law had expired'".

In 1865, Walt Whitman, recognized today as one of America's greatest poets, was fired from his Government job for writing what is his best known work *Leaves of Grass*. Commenting on the times in 1871, he wrote (in the lesser known *Democratic Vistas*) "I say that our New World democracy, however great in uplifting the masses from their slough, in materialistic development, products, and in a certain highly deceptive, superficial, popular intellectuality, is so far, an almost complete failure in its social aspects and in really grand religious, moral, literary and aesthetic results ... In vain do we march with undercurrent vortices — all so dark and untried, outvying the antique, beyond Alexander's beyond the proudest sway of Rome. In vain we annexed Texas, California, Alaska and reach north for Canada and south for Cuba. It is as if we were somehow being endowed with a vast and thoroughly appointed body and then left with little or no soul".

At state and big-city levels, campaign money poured in abundantly for concessions to racetracks, utilities, houses of prostitution and gambling establishments. Big-time politicians, who presumably set the prices and the shares of the various elected officials, were wellknown — "Boss" William Tweed (and later "Honest John" Kelly) in New York, Quay and Boies Penrose in Pennsylvania, "Bathhouse John" Coughlin and Carter Harrison in Chicago, the "Old Regulars" in New Orleans, and "Doc" Ames in Minneapolis. "It was during the Golden Age of Boodle"



says Mr. Thayer "that the ties between politicians and the underworld became fixed. Bribing legislators for business rights was soon a matter of private, then even public auction". On whether Commodore Vanderbilt or Jay Gould should control the Erie Railroad, votes were sold for as much as \$5,000 each. Sometimes greedy officials sold the same rights more than once, as they did the street car rights to certain streets in major cities. "Standard Oil" says Mr. Thayer "did everything to the Pennsylvania legislature except refine it ... Samuel Huntington, the President of the Union Pacific admitted under oath that in an eleven-year period his Washington lobbyists had handed out more than \$6,000,000 for what he called 'legal' and 'miscellaneous' purposes, but which were in reality bribes in the form of campaign contributions."

Soon, the rich began to feel that it might be worthwhile to have themselves elected to high federal and state positions, in addition to sponsoring others. The list of corruptions seems endless, but one case mentioned by Mr. Thayer is important to relate as indicative of the times. Senator Quay from Pennsylvania, when up for re-election, had proceeded to bribe what seemed to him was a necessary number of fellow legislatures. However, "a later count showed that, despite the bribes, the votes were evenly divided between those for and against him. Quay then had several of his men round up a stray legislator who happened to be ill in the hospital. The man was carried into the chamber on a stretcher and he raised his hand weakly in favor of Quay's re-election. Quay's supporters whooped with joy and trooped out to celebrate their leader's victory. The ailing legislator, however, was forgotten in the ensuing commotion and was left to lie on his pallet in a cold hall outside the chamber. He contracted pneumonia and died soon afterward".

The heavy campaign spending by the big tycoons was especially effective at presidential level. For well over fifty years, until in 1913, all American Presidents, with the exception of Grover Cleveland, were Republicans backed with huge contributions and fervently partial to business interests. The big tycoons, sultans and barons of industry and trade now concentrated on nullifying all attempts to regulate against combines, mergers and the like which were creating monopolies. These monopolies allowed businessmen to set their own prices, to effectively smother any worker uprising, and to generally treat the markets as they wished. Aside from keeping possible government "interference" in this at home, there was the need for government interference in setting high tariffs and restrictions to keep foreign competition out of American markets. Initially, this insistence on freedom of enterprise for themselves but stringent laws against all foreign competition, was simplistically demanded. The American masses were not aware or knowledgeable enough to question the contradiction. But towards the end of the nineteenth century, some of the national prosperity was resulting in better education, and newspapers and liberal journalists were becoming widely read. A good, convincing rationale began to be increasingly propagated by politicians and newspapers alike — the latter as Big Business, were very much part of the team. Freedom of the individual was the great American heritage, they said. Freedom of enterprise has made this country great. Let us not place hindrances such as regulations or income tax on the rich because the prosperity trend may be hampered and the country, even the poor, will suffer greatly. And as for foreign competition, "America First" took care of that. When necessary to add emotional force, "Manifest Destiny" and the Monroe Doctrine were applied. President Garfield, a reformer, was soon killed. Cleveland managed to survive strong business backing of his opponents twice, but did not, or could not, do much by way of reforms while in office. William Jennings Bryan, who might perhaps have been one of



America's truly great Presidents had he been elected, tried more than once, but there just was not enough money to win. The 1896 Presidential campaign of McKinley, with what may be the first modern-style promoter named Marcus Hanna in charge, was to use up \$6-7,000,000. It was the first time the telephone was used to garner votes and the first time that product merchandising methods, such as they were, were used to win the presidency.

## (iii)

Education — even though it was heavily business-oriented — was on the move. By 1900, there were 185 business and industrial combines with assets in excess of \$3,000,000,000. They needed workers. In 1870, there were only 500 high schools in all U.S. By 1900 there were 6,000. Aside from the fierce competition in commerce, and flashy extravagance, many of the tycoons, barons, princes, sultans and nabobs of industry and commerce (significantly such titles were sought and freely used) tried to outdo one another in educational and charitable foundations. Even if their motives may not have all been pure, such foundations that have survived have been a source of considerable help to the masses over the years — a fact that Big Business advocates always point to with pride.

And so, unhampered, John D. Rockefeller, the oil magnate, whose Standard Oil was fast cornering the oil market, was also to corner transportation and refining of oil to paralyse competition and create his own price structures. Carnagie, the Scottish immigrant, who had been amassing over \$10,000,000 profits a year in steel and other financial dealings from 1894 each year until 1899, struck a high level of \$23,000,000 profits in 1900, all of course tax-free. Carnagie and J. Pierpont Morgan were to lock horns and Morgan came away with the steel monopoly which he now called U.S. Steel. Six financial groups controlled 95% of the nation's railway mileage. By 1904, 1% of the business tycoon families of America owned nearly 90% of the nation's wealth, 10,000,000 families were estimated to be living in poverty.\* The average worker earned \$1.51 a day. Women and children earned less. An attempt to set minimum wages for women was reinforced by having women appear and testify how their desperate plight forced them into prostitution. The bill, however, did not pass. Mother Mary Lease, the "Pythoness of the Prairies" called it "a government of Wall Street, by Wall Street and for Wall Street". In 1896, General Jacob Coxey led a march of the poor and unemployed to Washington. He was jailed.

Workers, however, had started to form unions, and despite the force used by employers and police to break them, often with considerable bloodshed, one out of every four workers in 1884 male workers were members of unions. There was the Haymarket bombing in 1886. In his second term, President Cleveland — the Democrat who Big Business had been so afraid would place restrictions on them — had personally ordered the strikers at the Pullman railroads to be put down, and armed police and guards had done just that. These excesses were providing Socialists with the emotions they needed to make inroads, and they did. However, less extremist and more intellectual social reform movements were now beginning to emerge, mainly through the influence of British socialism. In 1900, another British

\* These figures were estimated when the very poor and the blacks ("negroes") were very inaccurately counted. The poverty figures would if anything be vastly underestimated.

import, the Salvation Army was in America. In 1905, while on their honeymoon, young Eleanor Roosevelt took her husband Franklin to meet the visiting British Fabians, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, at lunch. The Webbs were the founders of the Fabians, to which many of the British intelligentsia, including George Bernard Shaw, belonged. The American Republican Progressives were in the process of being formed, but a new intellectual stream was also entering the Democratic Party. But these were to be fringes of these parties — and never more than that.

The move of the American worker from farmland to urban areas, along with the massive arrival of more immigrants was creating urban horrors. The move to urban centres was becoming imminent to farm workers. "In 1870, while 47% of the population derived its living from agriculture, only 7% of Congress members had any direct connection with the soil" writes Mr. Frank Friedall (*America in the Twentieth Century*). A bushel of wheat that yielded \$1.05 in 1870, was, by 1894 to bring only 87 cents to the farmer. Cotton in 1896 brought less than 15% of what it had in 1866 to the farmer. Middlemen had arrived, so that, according to Mr. Friedall, the farmer received only 50% of consumer price on dairy products and 17% of what the consumer paid for wheat. By 1890, there were more mortgages than farms in the northern plain States, and bankers charged farmers 8-10% interest on mortgages. Social Darwinism, the survival of the fittest, was well under way.

An increasing segment of the labor force realized this. The Pullman affair had been a glaring example of the fact that Big Business would employ workers at living wages as long as the rate of profit for the owner continued to rise. Once the rate of profit increases was stagnant or reduced, the workers were the first to suffer. More and more workers were convinced that Democracy had failed and Socialism was the only recourse. The very rich, on the other hand, vied with each other in seeking social success. Conspicuous spending and gaudy splendor was "in". Castles were being built or transported from Europe. A tycoon's wife in New York, keen to outdo competition in extravagance, gave a \$250,000 dinner. Such was the public outcry against this that she had to flee the country with her husband. New York's Waldorf Astoria was redone in the image of France's Versailles Palace. The construction of the New York Metropolitan Opera House sought to outdo all others in opulence. "The Goulds and the Vanderbilts and people of that ilk" wrote the *New York Dramatic Mirror* on the 1894 opening "perfumed the air with the odor of crisp greenbacks. The tiers of boxes looked like cages in a menagerie of monopolists".

In the tenements and shantytowns of New York, Chicago and other major cities, poverty and disease flourished. Urban population had doubled from 1880-1890 alone. Chicago still had its cattletown look and slaughterhouses in gross conditions for both the workers and the slaughtered meat. "Having seen it" said Rudyard Kipling "I urgently require never to see it again". Charles Dickens was even less complimentary about American urban conditions.

The problem for government in the new Big Business economy was a complex one. Without disturbing the income growth of the very rich, an answer was needed now, close to the end of the 19th century, to the farm and urban unrest and inflation, if mass rebellion was to be avoided. New markets outside the U.S. seemed to be the answer, new markets that would not invite foreign competition at home, nor equal privileges for the businessmen of those other lands.

The opportunity presented itself in what we know from text books as the Spanish-American War. It could perhaps just as well have been called the William Randolph Hearst War.



## (iv)

Commercial media, now already Big Business, was widely read and beginning to form public opinions. The nation needed foreign markets. Mr. Hearst's *New York Journal* and Mr. Pulitzer's competitive *World* provided the War.

Newspapers in America had to decide by now if they were to aim to be small newspapers of integrity or highly profitable business with mass circulation. Syndicated wire services were now the norm. Major international and national news had become available to all subscribers since the first such service, commenced by Reuters, had flashed the news of President Lincoln's murder across the Atlantic. This major achievement in instantaneous communication of news was a tremendous leap, with obvious benefits, but it was not without repercussions. It meant that all competitive newspapers had access to major events but such news could be colored, even heavily slanted, should the news services elect to do so over one or more issues. And with standardised news accessibility to all subscribing newspapers, something *more* than news was seen by the ambitious business-oriented owners to be necessary if they were to attract mass audiences.

To Thomas Jefferson the newspaper had the sacred duty of factually and sincerely enlightening the public. To an increasing number of American dailies at the turn of the century, profits were what it was all about.

The circulation-boosting stunts of Alfred Pulitzer (later to set up the prestigious Pulitzer Prize) for his newspaper *New York Herald* and the even more bizzare gimmicks of William Randolph Hearst of *The San Francisco Examiner* and *The New York Morning Journal* can be said to have formerly installed the age of yellow journalism, a milestone in the shape of things to come. Sensationalized journalism had existed from the earliest times but not with the power it now wielded. Pulitzer's methods included ultra-sensational headlines, resounding stunts and "crusades" of one kind or another that the potential reader would feel drawn to, and, when attaining 100,000 circulation in 1884, the booming of cannons in New York. The success of these methods drew Hearst like a magnet from California in 1895. On behalf of his *New York Journal* he matched wild headlines and sensationalism with Pulitzer and then proceeded to out-stunt Pulitzer with brass bands, outdoor advertising gimmicks, even money mailed to registered voters. With cash he lured away the staff of the *World* eventually, including the artist who drew the Yellow kid cartoons for the *World* (which is where the term 'Yellow Journalism' is reported to have originated).

But Hearst's dubious claim to fame must surely be his newspaper's role in starting the Spanish-American War. "Hearst's *Journal* boomed on a continuous diet of lurid, unchecked and boldly splashed atrocity stories in which the Spanish authorities figured as 'butchers', rapists, torturing tyrants ad infinitum" writes the British journalist Mr. Harry Hopkins in his excellent book *The Numbers Game*. "It blazoned endless 'Insults to the American Flag', staged heroic rescue expeditions. And although Pulitzer and the *World* were normally liberal, he simply could not afford — as he himself candidly admitted — to disregard such wonderful circulation stimulants. The *World* went after the *Journal* with atrocity for atrocity, insult for insult, 'call for action' for 'call for action'".

By now the needs of Big Business for extreme nationalism, to ensure strict tariffs against foreign competition, were also being well indoctrinated into the American people. Public feelings against the Spanish had already been raised to a fever pitch when the U.S. Destroyer, S.S. *Maine*, exploded near the Cuban waters. Hearst's



banner headlines charged "Destruction of the *Maine* was the work of an enemy" and offered \$50,000 for conviction of those responsible.

The *World* headline on February 15, 1898 after the *Maine* explosion said (in the when-did-you-stop-beating-your-wife style) "*Maine* Explosion Caused By Mine or Torpedo". The stories left no room for doubt that the villains in any case were the Spanish. When war was declared, the battle cry became the now famous "Remember the *Maine*". Three-quarters of a century later, was to come a startling discovery, not too publicized but nevertheless very creditable to the U.S. Navy admiral for its admission. The *Maine* was not sunk by the Spanish after all. In his book *How the Battleship Maine Was Destroyed* (1976), Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, Head of the U.S. Nuclear Propulsion Department said that on a resurvey of the evidence on the sunken ship, it has been found that the explosion was probably the result of a spontaneous combustion of coal, not the work of an enemy contact mine.

Back in 1898, the newspapers, however, convinced the public it was Spain. In actual fact Spain had agreed to all U.S. demands but President McKinley had declared war any way, fought and won. By now, signs of colonialism were starting to emerge as an important status symbol and, as we have seen, an economic need. While battling the Spanish in Cuba, America not only annexed Puerto Rico but the distant Phillipine Islands as well. It took three years of fighting to convince the Fillipinos that they needed to be civilized by America but it was done.\* Constitutional privileges were, however, not permitted by Congress to the conquered Puerto Ricans and the Fillipinos; nor, in fact, even to the "citizens" of Hawaii, annexed in 1900 or of Alaska, bought from Russia fifty years before.

Theodore ("Teddy") Roosevelt returned from the Spanish-American War a hero. President McKinley was killed in 1901 and Vice-President Roosevelt was President. A well-meaning leader at home, against corruption and at least some of the monopolies, even though he was himself of the oil tycoon Roosevelt family, Roosevelt frightened his fellow-Republicans and their business supporters with this shocking break from recent tradition, but they need not have worried too much. Upon reading Upton Sinclair's expose on the Chicago slaughterhouse conditions, (*The Jungle* should be compulsory reading at all schools) he did move for some basic legislation on hygiene. Periodically however, his more colorfully eccentric side took over and he just did not have the time for the mundane tasks of government. He lived, whenever he could, his Walter Mitty daydreams of Cowboy/Explorer. If it was too early in time for Zane Grey, the writer of Cowboy fantasies, to have fired his imagination (as he did many years later), Roosevelt no doubt had found others. In the Spanish American War, he had galloped with buoyant glee across San Juan Hill, with a band of men he called the Rough Riders, wearing, it is reported, a sombrero and polka-dot handkerchief flying from his neck as he "charged". As President, he elected to pioneer the unabashed form of Dollar Diplomacy which helped create a revolt in Columbia, Central America. Galloping down there to the aid of the rebels, who his own Cabinet had set up, he assigned himself the right to create — and then claim the control of — the Panama Canal.

Periodically he galloped off on hunting expeditions. At one of these "wanting once more to be a boy", he lost most of his party and barely made it back alive himself.

\* The matter was to lay heavily on the true American conscience however and in 1946 the Phillipine Islands were freed.

In later years, when Wilson was President, gung-ho Roosevelt was quite upset when Wilson would not let him gallop across the Atlantic with his Rough Riders into World War I. He considered Wilson a "flapdoodle pacifist" for wanting to have that War end with "peace without victory".

William Howard Taft, today fondly called the Granddaddy of the Republican Party, was the next President. Detractors called him Fatty (he weighed over 300 lbs.). Roosevelt had not wanted to remain President and had sponsored Taft's election. The Spanish American War and the acquisition of Colonies had been very profitable for Big Business but not for the masses. The news of extraordinary overnight fortunes and general boom time in America had been bringing waves upon waves of immigrants to the American shores, especially after the Civil War. Some came seeking freedom and peace, but most came seeking Opportunity. There were an abundance of Irish peasants from the potato-famine-stricken farms since the 1840s; but now came more peasants and urban poor from Italy, Sweden, Poland, Greece, Turkey, and Jews in increasing numbers from various parts of Europe and from Russia. The Statue of Liberty, a gift from France in 1886, provided this message by America for Europe and the World: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shores..." And they came in droves, many with nothing more than what they wore, with tears of joy at the sight of Ellis Island, gateway to the Land of Opportunity, where the streets were said to be paved with gold. Others cried because it was the land of liberty. There were restrictions of course. The Chinese, imported to help build the railroad links to the West Coast, had been allowed to stay but further Chinese migration had been stopped with the Chinese Exclusion Bill of 1883. The Japanese were barred in 1907. Strict laws in fact were to go into effect especially for the less-favored, non-white countries under President Harding and stricter still in 1929 under Hoover. But from 1820 to 1929, nearly 40,000,000 European immigrants were to arrive forming now a large segment of the urban population. Many of the earlier migrant hands had been drawn from Europe with the incentive of a \$25 steamer and rail passage to the new Midwest. No such incentives were required any longer.

But the streets paved with gold eluded the new immigrants. New York's 43,000 tenements housed over 1,500,000 (about 75% of the city's population). Child labor was very profitable and prevalent. Children died in accidents with machines at factories, others from malnutrition, overwork. There were frequent epidemics of small pox, typhoid and other diseases, and there were fires from which there was no escape in the rat-infested rooms, usually housing entire families in each, with no windows.

In the sweatshops of the New York garment districts, women worked for a pittance (and often in desperation as part-time prostitutes) sixteen to eighteen hours a day. They were usually locked in during working hours to avoid escape. Tammany Hall continued corrupt, though social workers and a few concerned citizens were beginning to demand regulations and reforms. Accidents and fires usually brought the horrors to public notice and increased the social concern of the citizens. One such fire, at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in 1911, killed 148 young women, who because of the locked doors, could not escape. It resulted in the first piece of legislation to protect the lives of workers. More was to come, but later, under the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt.

Washington had some concerned officials, but mainly, Big Business interests continued to prevail. Some of the elected officials were genuinely convinced that the



economy might somehow be irreparably damaged with any kinds of regulations against business. Other top officials, of course, had the formula that was by now standard, to soothe and often convince the poor. The best economic policy, they said, was for the rich to get richer so the poor could eventually have more and better jobs. Wasn't that what liberty was all about? Let those who can, go out and make their own millions. The survival of the fittest. It was a standard formula by now. It convinced many and was to be repeated often in the future decades.

Many of the immigrants did feel convinced; a few saw it as opportunity for the future. If they became successful, they in turn could do the exploiting, they felt. Restrictive laws would then restrict them too. For those who could survive the ordeals of labor and poverty and find the opportunity, there could be these Pearly Gates of Heaven — suburban mansions, riches and the august circles of debutant balls and banquets. To many of the immigrants and natives that was what freedom was all about. In Europe, the aristocracy was still the very rich, and no matter how rich one became through trade — as many Americans had found, and were to find for decades later — entry into society was never possible. In America, however, especially in the America of the time, even gangsters when rich were powerful and respected members of society, often wielding more power than all other citizens in the major cities. Among the ethnic immigrants, segments of the Sicilians, in particular, made careful note of this. As for the rest of the ethnics, even if there were to be social barriers, the opportunity to strike it rich was incentive enough. With money maybe they could break the social barriers, or make their own upper class societies, while getting their children better educated so they could break into the mainstream. They anglicized their names and set about their objectives. Whatever the hardships, if they could survive, there was hope — more than many had known in the Old World. The important thing was to stay alive till that Big Break.

Many workers, however, American born and recent immigrants, were becoming increasingly hard to control. Periodically, even the passive workers, dreaming dreams of future riches, broke loose. The United Steel Company, under Pierpont Morgan, was already on its way to become richer than the U.S. Government (which by 1916 it was). But the workers still had to slave a 12 hour shift, seven days a week.

Another segment of the population was becoming restless. Women were demanding the right to vote, more strongly than ever. The redoubtable Susan B. Anthony, had taken the world of men by shock and surprise, by inviting imprisonment on behalf of the women's movement. "Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God" she said, quoting Jefferson. In addressing a group of women on April 13, 1910, Taft advised that voting for women be not sought because the power of the ballot would be controlled by the 'less desirable class' of women. Women were eventually to get the right to vote by the 14th Amendment in 1919, ratified in time to vote in 1920.

Taft was what is called "Conservative" today. This simply meant he did not want change — not in terms of some time-tested, centuries-old traditions (which America as yet only 140 years old did not have), nor in adherence to the original idealistic aims of the founders, but in terms of where the country was, and had been, for the past fifty years. The tycoons similarly did not want change. They were quite happy to have things as they were right then. After his one-term as President (he was defeated at the ballot in 1912 not only by President Woodrow Wilson, but fellow-Republican Teddy Roosevelt as well), he was to be made Chief Justice of the Supreme Court after World War 1. To Taft, and to many of the powerful friends of Big Business, to be "Conservative" was to hold conditions wholly favorable to Big Business as they had



now been for fifty years. The seeds of what may be called Opportunistic Conservatism\* were being duly sown into the American System. There was now to be a brief interruption in this trend with Woodrow Wilson, but image-making tools were now being sharpened into professional use in politics, and Opportunistic Conservatives (Op-Cons) were soon to take the nation right into the Great Depression.

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\* Opportunistic Conservatism (Op-Con) a term coined here, was an emerging American phenomenon not to be confused with genuine Conservative philosophy; its adherents were those who had furiously objected, as their forefathers had, to feudalism and original Conservative doctrines; once rich however, they quickly embraced "Conservative" values, seeking both status and the right to hold Big Business prerogatives.

## *A Moral Interruption*

(i)

Teddy Roosevelt himself, was very disappointed in Taft's presidency. In 1912 he decided to enter the Presidential elections, and in dividing votes enabled Democrat Woodrow Wilson to win. Wilson's election to the presidency marks a unique chapter in American history. A former Princeton professor and an intellectual, it would not have been possible for him to win without the split vote of the Republicans. His election by the masses however was not as an intellectual, but as a humane individual, whose views touched the hearts of the majority. His genuine concern for their welfare somehow reached the public through the blaring trumpets of presidential advertising campaigns on both sides.

There was inflation but times were improving and new inventions and innovations in industry were making the economy thrive. The true benefits of a free society were emerging alongside the evil excesses that had become "traditional" after Grant. Advertising was now a profession of creative pioneering minds with sharp ideas like Albert Lasker, adding a new twist — that new product ideas had to sell changes in lifestyle as well, to create a need. New packaging, selling and merchandising ideas had developed in these decades which in the future would change the pattern of American life. Ward had commenced with direct mail sales of cheap goods in 1879. Sears, a railway clerk had stumbled into selling watches part-time by mail in 1886; together they developed a thriving mail-order business. Cheap articles for the masses under one roof was F.W. Woolworth's idea in 1879, the precursor of five-and-ten cent stores and then the department store. Impulse purchase, which was to revolutionize consumer and package attitudes was introduced with the first Piggly-Wiggly self-service food store in 1916. Henry Ford (or more correctly his partner and sponsor, Couzens) had by now also introduced the assembly-line method in manufacture, which, even though it was to eventually create the robot-like mental paralysis in the minds of millions of American blue-collar workers of the future, did dramatically increase production and reduce the price of cars, and with it, increased demand.

Wilson's election, however, caused great fears to throb through Big Business in its monopolistic tendencies, exploitation of workers, buying of politicians. Not since Abraham Lincoln, fifty years ago, had there been an idealist in the White House.

Wilson, for his part, made it very clear that he was not against Big Business at all, only its gross malpractices. To Big Business, however, raising even fundamental questions of morality with regard to Big Business was to be feared. And Wilson did

raise such awkward questions. "The Government of the United States is now the foster-child of Special Interests" he said "It is told at every move 'Don't do this, you will interfere with our prosperity'. And when we ask 'where is that prosperity lodged?' a certain group of gentlemen say 'With us'. The Government of the United States in recent years has not been administered by the common people of the United States".

To Wilson, there was a critical need for America to return to its original ideals and objectives from which he felt it had strayed very far. But like Thomas Jefferson, more than a century before, Wilson was unable to find the necessary support to implement most of his ideas. He was not an adroit politician. He did begin to try and close the more obvious loopholes in income tax laws that had just been finally passed (attempts to introduce a basic income tax in the country had been resisted for forty years).

He did manage to improve food laws to an extent. However, his attempts to safeguard children from being employed for harsh and dangerous jobs, met with failure in the Supreme Court; a bill he signed levying a tax on products produced with child labor, was later invalidated by the Supreme Court, on which former President Taft was now Chief Justice. Wilson signed a bill prohibiting interstate transport of products made with underage child labor. The Supreme Court squashed that too. Big Business and the Supreme Court were not just interested in safeguarding Big Business interests. Wilson was an idealist and had to be made unpopular with the public whose champion he was. The one sure way to do this was to make him an ineffective President by stagnating the economy. He would eventually lose his popularity with an impatient public, who would not make the effort to understand why he was ineffective. It was a policy that was to be successfully used by Special Interests through its major media to make future Presidents unpopular with the masses as well. Jimmy Carter was to learn this only too well.

Wilson had a deep-rooted unpopular belief that new immigrants had as many rights as other Americans. In times of great stress, the masses — especially the poorly educated — are apt to blame the weakest segments for their problems. In America the labor classes increasingly blamed the new immigrants for their economic problems. Segments of media played up this issue, a safe and effective scapegoat to find outside the American institutions. It was soon to become a furious and fanatical issue, leading to grave injustices, the popularity of the Klu Klux Klan and other extremist groups, and severe immigration restrictions.

(ii)

But now, the American economy and its inflation would receive a boost: involvement in "the War to end all wars". World War I was on in Europe since 1914. It was a War precipitated by jealousies and the bruised pride of cousin monarchs of Germany, Russia, France and Britain. Ambitious politicians and Rothchilde's gunpowder had expanded this into a War more destructive than any the world had ever known.

Wilson and the American people did not want to be in that War. However, Wilson, unlike most of the Americans and his political opposition, was not an isolationist. Conceptually he favored the spreading of American ideals around the world; this, was what the American Experiment was all about. However, he felt, this



expansion of the American idealism required learning from the world as well. Needless to say, it was not a popular sentiment among most Americans. Neither was it particularly popular with the masses — or the American rich — when he said that those who formed ethnic and nationality groups (hyphenated Americans), whether born in America or abroad, had not truly become Americans. However, his sincerity and concern for the masses prevailed over all the efforts of his opposition and he was re-elected President in 1916.

American arms and other supplies to the Allies irked Germany, leading to the sinking of the *Lusitania*. Essentially, it was from knowledge gained from interception of the Zimmerman cable from Berlin to the German Ambassador that made Wilson and the American majority change their minds about entering the War in 1917. Following General Pershing's exploits into Mexico, the cable reportedly offered Mexico Germany's help to reclaim Texas, New Mexico and Arkansas from the United States, if Mexico supported the Axis. America was now in the War with troops and a formal declaration.

Active participation in the War heightened changes and differences in America. Before final victory for the Allies, America lost nearly half a million soldiers. Psychologically, there were dichotomous consequences. Americans, who were in Europe *en masse* for the first time, felt a deep inferiority to Europeans. The newly created IQ test, imported from France and administered to American GI's, was reported as finding that, "47% of whites had the mental age of no more than [children of] twelve". The blacks scored even worse. Against that was the enormous enhancement of America as a world power. Wilson was greatly responsible for this new respect for America in Europe, in setting up the Treaty of Versailles and in relief for war-stricken millions in Europe, with the help of future President Hoover.

But this involvement with foreign affairs allowed his political opponents to convince the majority of Americans at home that isolationism was best for America, especially as the economy from the War production was now booming again. Wilson worked tirelessly to convince America of its worldwide responsibilities; all it achieved for him was extreme exhaustion and what was to be an illness from which he never fully recovered. Despite all of Wilson's entreaties, America was not a signatory to the Treaty of Versailles. Totally incapacitated in the final year in office, Wilson bitterly told America that society could not survive without higher purpose "sympathy and helpfulness and a willingness to forgo self-interest in order to promote the welfare, happiness and contentment of others and of the community as a whole". The Democrats selected Cox as the Democratic candidate for the 1920 elections. In 1920, ailing Wilson was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Cox lost to Warren Harding, the Republican candidate. Wilson died in 1921.

## 6

# *Image-making Takes Hold*

(i)

**T**he election of Warren Harding needs to be looked at a little closely. It was to be another milestone in American history. Advertising and public relations gimmicks were now to be tied to politics with none other than the best professionals. The tools were simple, even innocuous by later standards. But they worked, setting the pattern for the future.

Harding's nomination by the Republican party was itself one of the most unusual surprises in American political history. It was an election in which all the big-time package goods tradesmen had thrown their weight in with great fervor. Eight years under Wilson had been hard for Big Business to take and they did not relish any more bleeding hearts after the smooth-sailing of previous years. Proctor, the Ivory Soap millionaire (whose company today is called Proctor & Gamble, the largest advertiser in the world) had thrown his support behind Republican Leonard Wood, (a Big Business friend) and spent a fortune in posters, pamphlets, billboards and buttons, not to mention brass bands. Standard Oil's H.H. Rogers and James Duke, the Tobacco King, similarly supported Wood. Republican Hiram Walker (another Big Business appointee) was initially the choice of Albert Lasker, the advertising genius, and of Wrigley, the Chewing Gum Chief. In the first major political poll conducted for Presidential elections, Wood was shown as having 277,000 votes, Johnson 263,000 and Hoover 240,000. Harding had a bare 36,000.

But at the Republican convention there was a deadlock, followed by the usual wheeling and dealing. Out of it all, somehow, Harding emerged the Republican nominee. Harding, a keen poker player, described his own victory this way: "We drew to a pair of deuces and scored".

Lasker now threw his support behind Harding, as did Proctor, Wrigley and the rest of the tycoons. But Lasker's support meant something special. Lasker became the image-making genius behind Harding and he proceeded to use his wiles in formulating Harding's campaign. "America First" was the slogan he chose for Harding.

Lasker, the son of an immigrant pedlar, had joined Lord & Thomas, the ad agency (now Foote Cone & Belding) in 1898 at a salary of \$10 a week. An astute, innovative and aggressive marketing man, he had arrived on the scene when the advertising business was still in its infancy — there were just two other known agencies then in the U.S., J. Walter Thompson founded 1868, and N.W. Ayer & Son, founded 1869. Lasker soon made subordinates of his teachers, Claude ("Salesmanship

in Print") Hopkins and John E. Kennedy. He quickly owned Lord & Thomas, had profitable shares in clients' businesses and with brilliant marketing ideas was generally considered the leading ad man (or as he himself put it "There is no advertising man in the world but me"). But while his advertising and marketing ideas no doubt provided considerable impetus to the American economy and made him a wealthy man besides (he was to retire, despite occasional setbacks, with total earnings above \$45,000,000), he also made smoking a household habit among women; he can be said to have popularized the effective use of "half-truths" in selling; his was the mind that pioneered "soap opera" on commercial radio, (he was to be friend and adviser to David Sarnoff, as the latter built his RCA and NBC Radio and TV empire); and though the McKinley crowd had used heavy advertising including telephone campaigning, Lasker's Harding campaign can be credited — if that is the word — with introducing professional advertising methods and gimmicks to presidential politics.

The "America First" slogan was aimed to immediately garner support from all those who did not want any involvement with the world's problems, with the Treaty of Versailles, with more immigrants and who believed exclusively in pocketbook policies. Harding was handsome and that was a great asset; in private it was opined that "even if Harding never should be President, he still looked like one." Front Porch campaigning, which McKinley had used, seemed ideally suited for Harding too, emphasising the small town unspoilt image as well. To herald his Front Porch reception, brass bands were employed daily. An Indian Chief was produced to show his support. Grand Army veterans were brought and of course, with the threat of income taxes from the Wilsonian Democrats, there were the new millionaires of Hollywood, more than willing to lend a hand for Republican Harding. Al Jolson blacked his face in a "Jazz" Front Porch. Forty actors and actresses marched with a hundred-piece band. Harding was made to pose with them all. Carrier pigeons were sent with goodwill messages to trade conventions such as that of United Drug Company.

Lasker met with unexpected problems but he handled them ably. Early in the campaign, Mrs. Philips, one of Harding's mistresss, appeared, ready to make trouble. Mrs. Philips chose to stand at the Front Porch herself, but it was Mrs. Harding who took care of that. She threw a feather duster, a wastebasket and a wooden stool — reportedly in that order — at the unfortunate woman. Lasker later arranged to buy her off. Another of Harding's earlier affairs had produced a child. The mother, Nan Britton, wrote a book about it (*The President's Daughter*) which was read but only after Harding became President so nothing was lost. (Democrat President Cleveland had also survived a bastard child campaign by the Republicans in the late 19th century.) A smear campaign began early — as it had followed Harding all his life — from the bigoted factions that Harding was of negroid origins. A genealogy was prepared by local racists who claimed that Harding's paternal grandfather and grandmother were "negroes" and that his family was the fourth generation from an Amos Harding. It went deeply into Harding's family history on both sides. (The ailing Woodrow Wilson, on hearing of this, immediately advised the Democrats "We cannot go into a man's genealogy; we must base our campaign on principles not back-stair gossip"). Democrats claimed wily Lasker had instigated this smear campaign himself to win public sympathy for Harding. Lasker's response to the issue, however, was that it had been manufactured by the Democrats as a smear campaign, which did win a lot of sympathy. Then he had a genealogy chart prepared himself, showing that Harding was lily white. His statement said, "No family has a clearer or



more honored record than the Hardings, a blue-eyed stock from New England and Pennsylvania, the finest pioneer blood, Anglo-Saxon, German, Scotch-Irish and Dutch". Lasker himself was of Jewish parentage.

Harding had, as William Allen White wrote, no more than "passing opinions". But Lasker did and on the isolation issue, he had Harding exclaim with patriotic fervor that "we decided a long time ago that we objected to foreign Governments on our people". The implication was that somehow, by signing the Treaty of Versailles, America would be owned by foreign governments. In fact, so appealing to Germans was the Harding isolation stance (Harding himself had originally leaned towards signing the treaty) that German papers of the time strongly endorsed Harding for President, and one went on to say: "A vote for Harding is a vote against the persecution of German-Americans" (*The Future of American Politics*, Samuel Lubbell; Harper, 1952).

Another Harding appeal to the public was made with the following argument: instead of choosing a superman to guide them, (such as Wilson had been) the American people should choose a President "near the normal". "His [Harding's] intellectual limitation" to quote the *Encyclopedia Britannica* "could not be entirely concealed". Cox tried hard to get Harding to debate, but Harding refused. He accused Harding of having no views of any kind, but being propped up by aides. But nothing helped Cox. Whether it was his good looks, his "mediocrity" and the woman vote (it was the first time women voted) or rural nostalgia, or the collective images created by Lasker, Harding won by a wide margin to become President.

On hearing the news, Woodrow Wilson in his sick bed, exclaimed plaintively "How can he lead when he does not know where he is going?"

A happy Warren Harding moved into the White House and set up his "Poker Cabinet". Lasker was suitably rewarded with important government positions, including that of Head of Shipping. And he was, of course, to continue as a close adviser. Harding set about implementing the policies that Big Business wanted. He ended all attempts to participate in the Treaty of Versailles and the International Courts. He went further; he made treaties with Germany, Hungary and Austria, all wartime enemies, to pay them money so they in turn could pay War losses to the Allies. He helped make the World Court powerless, created high tariffs, reduced taxes on the rich, did all that could be done to protect Big Business from the "whines and groans of labor", and hunted down "radicals" and suspected "radicals". Mellon, the Pittsburg tycoon, was appointed Secretary of the Treasury and he made sure Big Business was amply protected (Mellon stayed on under Coolidge as well).

Soon however, came disclosures of extreme corruption in Harding's administration. Significantly Wilson, the moralist, had vetoed the Bill on Prohibition. But now, Prohibition had been introduced in 1920 (the President however always managed to get his quota delivered to the White House), and with it an epidemic of crime and gangster control of the cities. Attorney-General Daugherty, a close friend of Harding had Ohio (Buckeye) friends who openly protected racketeers, owners of prostitution rings, bootleggers, and provided pardons. Lee Gibson, a convicted racketeer, was pardoned by Daugherty even before he began to serve his term.

Harding, however, was firmly backed by Big Business media. He even had a special bungalow set aside for journalists. But the increasing corruption eventually became too big for media friends to censor. The use of public money for private ends, the huge Teapot Dome and Elk scandals, malpractices in the Department of Justice, Navy, the Veterans' Bureau hit the headlines. One of the Cabinet, the Secretary of the

Interior, was finally jailed. The Attorney-General refused to testify on the grounds that he might incriminate himself. There was clamor for Harding's impeachment. But he was not impeached.

The Harding strategy — or rather, the strategy employed by his image-makers — was to become a blueprint, with experience and expertise, for many Republican Presidential hopefuls to come over the years. For Calvin Coolidge, his Vice-President, who became President on Harding's death, the Harding policies could be improved only by making them stronger. Coolidge now crystallized these policies by proclaiming that "the business of America is business". Even public utilities, he announced, belonged in the hands of private enterprise. He eased taxes on Big Business even more than his predecessor, made immigration laws more strict, especially from some countries, and pursued "radicals" and communist spies everywhere. And he slept. He slept an average of at least 12 hours each day.

The fever towards "America First" had more to it than isolationism; prejudice loomed large. The Russian Revolution of 1917, and the influence of communism was seen as a major threat to the American system, subsequently. Communism of course always thrives where there is grave injustice to the masses. A more lasting safeguard against communism would have been a humane change in Government policies, so that the masses — and labor in particular — were given a more equitable share in the American pie. Instead, aided by yellow journalism, a climate of hysterical extremism against "The Red Menace" had swept the country: labor leaders and those who strongly advocated better pay and working conditions for labor were seen as communists. European immigrants were viewed as communists. Soon in a fever pitch, with senior officials (such as Attorney General Palmer) in active participation, hoardes of immigrants were being deported back to Europe and many — irrespective of where they came from — to Russia. In one week 6,000 members of labor were arrested. Very many immigrants, who knew and cared nothing for communism, met this fate as well. After Wilson's last year as President, extremism took firmer hold. The Ku Klux Klan, which had commenced in Palaski, Tennessee after the Civil War now had no less than 5,000,000 members. Its creed was that America belonged to Protestant White America. Draped in white sheets and hoods they held weird and threatening ceremonies often accompanied by violence on their victims. In 1924 there were reportedly 350 delegates at the Democratic National Convention who were members. Hugo Black, who became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in the 1970s, admitted to being a member as a young man in the 1920s.

Japan was one of the countries from which immigration was totally barred. Japan had become a powerful industrial and military power by the turn of the twentieth century. Curiously, Japan's entry into international trade had been originally demanded by Admiral Perry who had, on behalf of American business, laid siege to Japanese ports, demanding "open door" trade policies. Now, Japan had also become the first country to become influenced by American lifestyle in a big way — from baseball to hot dogs. The Exclusion Bill of 1924 (forbidding further Japanese immigration) was therefore an emotional slap in the face for Japan which marked the passage of the Bill by declaring a National Mourning Day in Japan. Trade embargoes against Japanese goods were to further strain relations.

For the common man and woman in the U.S., many new and fascinating forms of escapism were now available however. But if these served the purpose of alleviating their daily drudgeries, they also served Big Business and Government with a powerful tool to keep the lid on mass frustrations, which the dread of communism may not have



effectively done. It was a time of glamorous innovations and dramatic change in lifestyles.

(iii)

The American masses were enthralled with these changes that were taking place around them. Private enterprise had led to terrible abuses but it unquestionably provided impetus for growth. Big Business developed innovations that touched American lives all the time. The incentive and freedom drove the ambitious to strive harder to create their own business empires. Whether it was home appliances, packaged and frozen foods or the glorious motor car, whether it was from an original idea or the development of an idea from overseas, American business was contributing greatly to the country's economic power and to making the daily lives of Americans — at least those who could afford it — more convenient and glamor-oriented. In a country as yet unsettled — many parts of the West were still reminiscent of the old Wild West — *laissez faire* was both an invitation to business enterprise and anarchy. Many overnight millionaires had shown restraint, even warm-hearted charity. Others, however, had excelled in flashy display of their wealth and fought one another to garner more millions so they could be more flashy. Powerful social coersions provide constraints against excesses and chicanery but no such constraints existed, especially in this era. In an era of organized crime, soon very much in control of both upper society and local governments, money was the highest social qualification, no matter how it was acquired. Al Capone did not merely control the police and the politicians. He socialized with the Best People.

In this milieu, there were individual journalists who braved personal dangers — professional and physical — to question, chastise, entreat changes. But in the era of glamorous and ever-multiplying media, the movies, magazines, newspapers and radio, their critical voices were almost drowned. Media was Big Business, intent to sell customers; its primary aim to make money. Hence, the Policy: to keep the public conditioned to believe that the glories of the rich around them were glories of the masses themselves. And it performed this task with great success. The Policy and the Formula was as old as human society itself and had been used to placate disgruntled masses many times before. But now there was massive commercial media, soon to have lethal bombastic power to use this Policy for political and profit objectives. It helped put the readers and audiences in the best mood to receive advertising messages and buy advertised products.

Cyrus Curtis, an advertising salesman from Boston, had by now created the Curtis magazine empire, based upon this formula. He had picked up the dying *Saturday Evening Post* in 1889 for \$1,000; by 1925 it had advertising revenues of over \$1,000,000 per single issue, against a sales revenue of \$80,000. Advertising of course was available because circulation had spiralled. And it had grown because it provided what women wanted — “romantic stories”, including lots of information on the homes of the rich and the Best People. Curtis' *Ladies Home Journal* provided all this and introduced “tailing”, i.e., running the latter part of stories in single columns flanked by advertising “so that the reader” writes Mr. Harry Hopkins (*The Numbers Game*) “as she follows the tales of romance and adventure in some nice American home was simultaneously presented with an illustrated and priced catalogue of its appurtenances”. “Tailing” was now recognized by magazines and newspapers as



a great method to induce the reader to see advertisements and enabled them over the years to increase the practice and garner vast fortunes in advertising. Studies of the future were to show that people read less when they had to turn several pages following each article in a newspaper or magazine, but this was relatively unimportant to profit-oriented media.

Art in the real sense had never become part of American life, except among small groups who were usually looked upon with suspicion and chagrin. Loose art forms had been incorporated into the marketing process, more than anywhere in the world, but that was the use of art forms for the purpose of selling products for profit.

The fusion of many nationalities, cultures and races however afforded America some great opportunities in art as in other direction. In one art form it was truly to flower: jazz. It was at the start extemporaneous, a marriage of African tempo, cotton field blues and Western music. The King Olivers, Ornett Colemans and Fletcher Hendersons made it big among serious adherents of music, black and white, but it was a more "whitened" form of jazz that now became popular, culminating in the Paul Whiteman concert at Carnegie Hall in 1920, and Al Jolson (who was Jewish and wore black make-up). Jazz, in a diluted form of pop, had influenced style and theatre generally, from the Gibson Girl to The Flapper. Broadway musical greats such as Oscar Hammerstein, Richard Rogers, Cole Porter, Cohen, and many more to come owed a great deal to the jazz influence. But Broadway musicals were also greatly influenced by another powerhouse: Florenze Ziegfeld. "Flo" Ziegfeld made millions and won great fame and prestige; he could make or break just about any show business personality, and was generally considered the biggest status symbol in the business.

What Ziegfeld did was, in essence, use not art but visual art trappings to make burlesque and strip shows expensive and therefore "reputable". His shows had more beautiful girls, better music, extravagant and imaginative settings than the average burlesque or strip shows which existed by the score in New York. With success, he got better talents, more beautiful girls. His shows soon made movies, and he was called a king and queen Maker. Ziegfeld himself admitted that he had no special talents — he did not write music, or possess any theatrical talents personally. He did not even design the exotic sets for his shows. What he had was the great ability to create an image around himself and his occupation. His form was to set a trend in box office appeal.

But as a medium that consumed all of America, it was the movies that set the mood of the nation, its living habits and its beliefs. By the 1920s, the movie industry was one of the very biggest in America. The early movie bosses were New York merchants aiming to clean up big as movie mania took hold. Appropriately William Fox, a former garment district worker, called his film enterprise "The Box Office Attraction Company". Ownership of movie companies remained in New York hands, even when its headquarters were moved to a wilderness named Hollywood around a township called Los Angeles. One source of inspiration for the movie tradesmen was the kind of material that had made yellow journalists so successful. The fascinating new medium attracted some of the very talented but soon the business minds had cornered the movie market. Though there were some pioneering artists who treated the medium as an art form, the Big Movie Moguls did not. As early as 1910, the Motion Picture Research Bureau compiled star popularity ratings and soon the Audience Research Inc. broke these down by age, sex, income and frequency of movie

attendance of respondents. Success and failure in this "art form" was to be measured entirely by box office receipts.

For every real talent in the movie industry there were hundreds of fakes, projected with astute cunning from a studio-created image; for every brilliant Charlie Chaplin, (who was to rebel with a few artists and form United Artists, later of course bought over by Big Business) hundreds of slip-shod pretenders in comedy, tragedy and drama, behind and in front of the camera. Movies were a gold mine, and had already caused another stampede, a second Gold Rush to California. Americans by the millions saved their pennies to buy tickets, and follow the gossips, real and imaginary, about their movie favorites. Aspiring actors and actresses swarmed to Hollywood. Once sound had become part of the movies, there was yet another phenomenon: the critical need for voice and speech teachers. Englishmen and women, with and without schooling themselves, were in great demand to train the stars and would-be stars — and to play the roles of British aristocracy, increasingly written into plots. Soon the Best People projected on the screen spoke with unusual British accents above American speech.\*

In one area this speech training was unnecessary: the highly successful movies about that wholly mythical character, the Cowboy.

Cowboy movies grew by the hundreds and grew to make heroes of known bandits and murderers as well. Western America was still not altogether tamed. Even where it was tamed, the public enjoyed the new glorification of their kindred of less than a generation past; all Americans did, in fact. Whether in the hands of Wyatt Earp, Diamond Jim or Jesse James, or when used by a law-abiding character, the Gun was developing the All-American image. The Cowboy and The Musical Extravanzas were very Big Money, and provided Hollywood with many multi-millionaires, with mansions, Rolls Royces and extravagant displays of wealth that often outshone the Eastern industrial magnets. For their upkeep, movies were turned out as though off an assembly line; writers were put into contract to churn out material on the lines of set Formulae known to have box-office appeal.

In retrospect, considering the power that it was to have over the nation's destiny, the birth of the broadcasting business was perhaps of more significance than any other

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\* P.G. Wodehouse, eminent British humorist, in addition to his role as a pioneer of Broadway musical comedy (with Guy Bolton and Jerome Kern) allowed himself to be lured briefly into a writing contract in Hollywood of the time. His letters to boyhood friend Bill Townsend and several articles and stories tell, in his incomparable style, what it was like to be in the writers' "leper colony" and the crazed movie industry; while perhaps the greatest master of contemporary English, Wodehouse was not above wooing the vast American market, especially in later years, with, among other techniques, Anglo-American alliances. Predictably, this was to set a pattern for later years. In many ways, this also set the pattern for the industry. Yet his feelings showed through on occasions: "Since the talkies came in, you can't heave a brick in Hollywood without beaming an English Elocution teacher" he wrote in *Laughing Gas* (1936); "References and qualifications are not asked. So long as you are English, you are welcomed into the home. I am told there are English elocution teachers making good money in Hollywood who haven't even got roofs to their mouths".

Wodehouse's description of New York and Hollywood — and of its people — in the era between the two World Wars is most revealing (*Psmith, Journalist, The Small Bachelor, The Mulliner Short Stories*, etc.). What makes his impressions even more significant is that, aside from the necessary compromise, he was, at this time, dependent on the American market, and was — rightly — heavily grateful for the early breaks he received from *The Saturday Evening Post's* Curtis, who taught him what was marketable. It is also indicative that American readers of the time were still psychologically secure enough to accept such ridicule, and enjoy it, from a foreigner.



commercial innovation. In 1901, Guglielmo Marconi, the Italian, had discovered wireless communication. The following year it had been brought to America by the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company. In post-War America, as radio became national, and private enterprises sought to control it, complicated wrangles developed. President Wilson had wanted federally regulated use of the new medium. President Harding's support of IT&T (International Telephone and Telegraph Co.) won for that giant corporation a "toll" station, thereafter a "toll" network. RCA, GE, Westinghouse first formed an amalgamation, then separated. When the dust had settled, radio networks were fully commercial and David Sarnoff (with brother Irving) of RCA had started his commercial broadcasting empire with National Broadcasting Service (NBC). Paley, a cigar manufacturer, bought himself a controlling share with Isaac Levy, Leon Levy and Lou Chheum in United Independent Broadcasters (later CBS). Much later (in 1941), NBC had to divert itself of its "Blue" network which was to become ABC. That third network, ABC, was to be bought by Leonard Goldenson, whose father owned several movie theatres, and was later to become part of the Paramount Picture/Gulf-Western conglomerate.

By the late twenties, radio was, after the movies, the big glamorous medium, with the widest daily reach of any form of mass communication. While the network owners themselves were diversifying to set up their own manufacture of radio sets, records and gramophones, they left the actual programming on radio virtually in the hands of advertisers and their advertising agencies.

Advertisers, as sponsors, and their advertising agencies, of course, required that their money be well spent, that the returns from these investments be the most profitable. The Audit Bureau of Circulation had been set up in 1914 for print media circulation data, and by now gave basic information broken down by some demographic groups (age, income, education etc.). For radio, market research had to delve not only into whether the commercial messages were understood and believed but the overall image of the program, its popularity, the number of listeners, and how many consumers were eventually converted to buying the product that sponsored a radio program. For this purpose, it was found necessary and economical to have weekly series so that a successful program format and its star could be used every week and on a contract. Market research methods were still crude and — by today's standards — meagre and unreliable. Even at the time, this was clearly recognized and therefore a good deal of reliance was placed on gut feeling, experience and judgement. Though sometimes some sponsors took chances, more and more looked for safe formats, safe scripts, performers with the right image.

It was the Jazz Age, but in deference to sponsor needs, Network Radio's jazz was made more safe and palatable for broad appeal in the form of "harmony and blues", from Al Jolson to Rudy Vallee to The Harmony Boys, the Ipana (toothpaste) Troubadours, A & P (food chain) Gypsies, Roxy and His Gang and so on. Albert Lasker, a friend of Sarnoff and still ad man for many national advertisers, suggested a radio version of working-class romances that were known in Europe as penny novelettes and which magazines in the U.S. had already found to be very popular. Soap manufacturers such as Proctor found them very appealing and soon radio was full of what came to be called "soap operas" (after their soap advertisers). The Cowboy was known to be a goldmine and many versions of Cowboy stories, from Tom Mix to the comics, were fed to America, each more heroic and more fierce against the Indian bad guys than the next, with scripts even more poorly written than in the



movies because of weekly needs. Humor and variety appeared in varying degrees of quality and corn.

Overall, advertisers ensured that certain basic messages reached America: glory of America, pride in all American achievement, digs against foreigners. Corporations tried to maintain an image of representing simple honest Americans, an image that individual performers themselves usually tried hard to project as well. "Apple Pie" was becoming a national institution. Radio began to use the magazine formula about How the Best People lived but commercial radio went one better; it not only told people through its story lines of "soap opera" how to live but emphasised that ordinary folks using ordinary American products were the Best People.

Soon, however, marketeers and their professionals felt they had used just about every angle. In his 1927 book *Advertising Research*, Percival White asked "What possibilities are there of discovering in him, the consumer, a response that has not yet been appealed to?". Other researchers were establishing basic rules for successful selling. Dr. Walter Scott of the Northwestern University, where advertisements were being tested, said what mattered in advertising was the *creation* of appropriate values. Habit, said Scott, was important to establish, just as "if you bend a piece of paper and crease it, the crease will remain even after the paper is straightened out". It was seen as excellent advice for radio programming itself as well. Increasingly, glamor, penny soap "drama", Westerns, humor and pop music poured through the ears of America at a weekly, habit-forming pace, accompanied by frequently repeated product commercials.

In the broader area of marketing, commercial radio caused major change as well. It could reach far-off rural areas and network "reach" increased by the month. Claude Hopkins, Lasker's teacher, had called advertising "salesmanship in print". Radio could be a salesman and reach into even more remote areas than the newspaper. While the "fuller brush" man, the door-to-door salesman, could follow up, radio could sell on its own as well as break down initial barriers. Product distribution and sales widened, backed strong glamor imageries. The first "5 & 10" and "all under one roof" store (Woolworth) and self-service foodstore (Piggly Wiggly) had already commenced a unique form of economic mass merchandising and impulse purchase. Advertising and elaborate packaging were now to join sales promotion in a new approach to a "Marketing Mix", with the aid of consumer research.

Hard sell was taking on a wider meaning. Fierce competition provided its own slant and impetus. The movies were now with sound and each medium learnt and imitated the other. The milieu gave rise to changing fundamental values much faster than ever before. Catch phrases found their way into American daily life from the media. "Never give a sucker an even break"; "Get the other guy before he gets you"; "There's one [sucker] born every minute". Chicanery was to become synonymous with being "smart" and Cunning was not only more fun, it usually won over boring Intelligence.

On commercial radio, there was one cardinal, unbreakable rule: nothing should upset the business of selling. There was, for instance, the case related by Mr. Harry Hopkins (*The Numbers Game*) of the earnest reporter H.V. Kaltenborn who soon went, at his own expense, to Spain to cover the Spanish Civil War, live; "broadcasting a bombardment from the shelter of a haystack so that Americans could hear the sounds of war, he [Kaltenborn] had to wait for a period unsold to any sponsor before he could go on the air".

Radio grew by the year in power, popularity and millions in profits for the owners of broadcasting. Concerned critics and intellectuals voiced their fears at the control that the movies and radio had over the common man and woman, about the fascism destroying Spain but no one was really listening to them: they had the radio on. A few years later, (in 1934), James Rorty was to write: (in *His Master's Voice*) "The American apparatus of advertising is something unique in history ... It is a grotesque, smirking gargoyle set at the very top of America's skyscraping adventures in acquisition ad infinitum. The gargoyle's mouth is a loudspeaker powered by the vested interests of a two billion (\$2,000,000,000) industry [of radio] and back of that the vested interests of business as a whole, of industry, of finance. It is never silent, it drowns out all other voices and it suffers no rebuke, for is it not the voice of America? That is its claim, and to some extent, it is a just claim. For at least two generations that grew up during the War [World War I] and after, have listened to that voice as an oracle. It has taught them how to live, what to be afraid of, what to be proud of, how to be beautiful, how to be loved, how to be envied, how to be successful. Is it any wonder that the American population tends increasingly to *speak, think, feel in terms of this jabberwockery*? That the stimuli of art, science, religion are progressively expelled to the periphery of American life, to become marginal values, cultivated by marginal people on marginal time?"

By the end of the 1920s, Americans were fully conditioned to revel in the achievements of the institution and people around them. The movies, the radio, the Flapper Age; Lindberg's solo flight and Byrd's polar expeditions had been celebrated as if every American had flown across the seas, each skyscraper the personal achievement of every common man and woman. Even on Wall Street, reality had commenced to be overtaken by the World of Illusion. Experienced and inexperienced speculators, convinced that nothing could go financially wrong in what was now the richest country in the world, and they the smartest, were competing fiercely at all levels; the tycoons to outdo other tycoons, the millionaires to become multi-millionaires, and the smaller fry to rise to the dizzy heights of the Best People.

There were the very few politicians, journalists and intellectuals who warned against impending dangers unless drastic changes were made. But they were ridiculed as cynics, subversives, pessimists; or — in language of later times — "bleeding hearts", "elite snobs", and "prophets of doom".

Even as the Crash commenced, President Herbert Hoover himself assured the nation that "prosperity is just around the corner". Then he was out campaigning for himself in Detroit among the wealthy industrialists. Henry Ford, the self-made (but unschooled) multi-millionaire was addressing a Hoover campaign meeting, recorded on film of course.\* Ford announced that he had full faith in President Hoover, that he was himself now a Republican. He ended his prepared speech with the claim that President Hoover was "the honestest, bestest man". That same day came the news that the national banks had closed their doors. By 1933 — Hoover's last year as President — 4,000 banks had closed; almost 33% of America's production had ended; 25% of those who had jobs lost them and joined the bread lines of poverty; others sold apples at street corners.

\* Ford used film extensively to promote his industry and to create a kind of legend about himself. His car radio commercials already sold Image: "Henry's made a lady out of Lizzie" one said.

## *Depression and the New Deal*

(i)

**T**he financial crash was far more than the obvious tragedy of losing money, the losing of jobs for millions and the losing of fortunes for the rich. There was the psychological blow that was in some ways even harder. The public had developed, from media illusions, the conviction of unending personal prosperity through the riches around them. The masses now faced the stark reality of poverty, joblessness and the bread line. Of course, the World of Illusion that the movies and radio had created was, relative to later times, tame. Nevertheless, the impact on the naive public had been powerful. Most Americans had come to believe that America was destined to leap from one level of prosperity to the next, no matter what anyone did. For first and second generation European immigrants the yearning to prosper had been intense: for prosperity itself and for the admiration and envy of their friends and relations in the Old World. The hardships suffered in tearing themselves away from the relative security of established society in the Old World — no matter how low their own positions in it — was now a terrible gamble that they suddenly felt they had lost. The fact that Europe was itself, in large part, in a depression was poor balm, even to those who knew it. As for the rich Americans, there was the added horror in poverty: of realising that their status and “respectability” had been tied almost entirely to their bank balance; without capital, they now found there was virtually nothing in their personal qualities that distinguished them from the rest of the poor. They plummeted down the income barriers to the lower class and were lost in it. Many saw this only too well, and chose suicide.

“Survival of the fittest” became even more than before the creed to live by. The Mafia’s creed, had itself, developed to its intensity through learning how to survive in the New World. Sicilians, like other new immigrant minorities, had been strongly discriminated against. Like other “ethnic-Americans”, they had learnt that respect and acceptance were inextricably linked to money in the New Country. It is significant that even the big Sicilian crime lords, no matter how casually they killed and indulged in lawless forms of fortune-hunting, were to maintain their deep family links, and claim, presumably believing themselves, to be highly religious.

In the era of The Cowboy and the Crime Syndicates, the Gun had become as important in real life as in the movies. Prohibition had been legislated in 1920 with the Volstead Act. To most Americans liquor was a minor vice. Making it illegal only gave it an extra spicy appeal, so those who drank merely drank more. The providers were the crime syndicates, their bootleggers and their speakeasies. Liquor had



become very Big Business, along with Gangsterdom's prostitution and gambling operations. In major cities like Chicago and New York, the crime lords were soon among the richest and the most powerful — and therefore, usually respected figures in Society. Contrary to what the movies would claim then and later, gangsterism did not die out after the G-men had conducted their highly publicized cleanups; some leading figures, it is true, were caught and there were some very determined men with integrity at the FBI and the Treasury, even occasionally in city police; but crime continued to flourish on a massive scale, even after prohibition. In that grand merger of gangsterdom called the "Seven Group", the supreme syndicate bosses included not only Italians and British, but top bosses like Meyer Lansky, "Butch" Schultz (Arthur Flegenheimer), Benny (Bugsey) Siegal, Louie (Lepke) Buchalzer, Abe ("Longie") Zwillman, Arnold Rothstein, Abe Bernstein, Nig Rosen.

They divided control of territories, but they pooled the profits; for instance, Zwillman and Siegal continued to control the New York garment district as they had during prohibition, for gambling and loan sharking, and then also controlled the Hollywood operations. Siegal pioneered Las Vegas, then the others joined him. And Meyer Lansky was a super boss in New York, Miami, and soon in Cuba, where he gave a small partnership to none other than Cuban President Batista himself, until 1959, when Castro took charge and removed Batista's government and the Lansky operation, thereby incurring the wrath of "The Seven Group". In his *Last Testament* (published at his request ten years after his death in 1975, by Goseh and Hammer), "Lucky" Luchiano, the kingpin of them all, was to name gangsterdom figures who are now among America's billionaire jet set "aristocratic" families.

Aside from the organised crime syndicates, there was a growing number of ad hoc criminal groups developing around the country. Jesse and Frank James, the Dalton Brothers, Wild Bill Hickok, Wyatt Earp, Billy the Kid, even the prostitute Diamond Lil and killer Calamity Jane had been glorified on the Silver Screen, and would be glorified a great deal more in future years. Already they were legends to some. But now there were fresh gangland folk heroes, from Dillinger to Pretty Boy Floyd; and of course Al Capone, whose annual income was estimated at \$6,000,000. There were now new types of gangs too: man-woman desperados like Bonnie and Clyde who could kill for a joke as easily as rob banks; and the Ma Barker type of groups — where the mother was the leader and was capable of killing her own brood if they did not kill when ordered, and would then insist that the family, like good Christians, attend Church regularly. Less organized crime also increased as normally law-abiding citizens took to it. Part-time prostitution was rampant. Teenagers, thirsting to enjoy the best years, formed their own gangs; others, less violent, were to turn to marathon dance contests, courting health disasters, even death, to earn pathetic amounts of prize money.

Union workers demonstrated for help. More than 15,000 World War 1 Veterans marched on Washington to be given a livelihood. What they got was a surprise attack by the U.S. Army at the orders of President Hoover. The man who led the charge that attacked, shot and drove the War Veterans Bonus Army out of Washington, was that national idol of future years: General Douglas McArthur; he was assisted by Dwight D. Eisenhower and George Patton.

It is highly significant that one of the measures undertaken under President Hoover to overcome the national disaster was to distribute free tickets to the movies for the poor. Walter Gifford, President of the giant IT&T Corporation had been appointed the head of Hoover's Organisation On Unemployment Relief. It was his

firm belief that movies "ranked just behind food and clothing" in importance (*We're In The Money*, Andrew Bergman). The movie industry agreed wholeheartedly; things were looking bleak. Box office receipts were to fall by 60% from 1931 to 1933.

Another major movement to fight mass poverty, was to arouse deep national pride. In 1931, amidst great pomp and circumstance, *The Star Spangled Banner* was selected as the National Anthem.

(ii)

Franklin D. Roosevelt became President in 1933. A product of the rich Roosevelt family, Roosevelt combined great ambition, guts and determination (he was by now a cripple from polio) with genuine concern and dedication for the American masses; the last quality was no doubt considerably enhanced by the influence of Eleanor Roosevelt and the early exposure to the British Fabians.

As a rich man himself, Roosevelt was not in awe of the rich. And so he began with prompt action to make life more bearable for the masses. He provided extensively for jobs in public works and in encouraging Big Business to increase employment.

He proceeded to take public utilities — at least selectively — away from Big Business where Coolidge had given them; he used his influence to have legislation passed to make insurance compulsory for banks (to avoid future hysteria and closings), Federal loans for homeowners to secure them from loss.

He signed laws that made it mandatory to make full and complete disclosures in the sale of stocks on the Stock Exchange. He caused, for the first time, to have laws passed that made provisions for the protection of the elderly, the crippled, the orphans. He announced the rights to Four Freedoms for all Mankind — freedom of speech and worship, and freedom from want and fear.

There was great and furious opposition to his New Deal, and Big Business and his Republican opponents branded Roosevelt a socialist, later even a communist. Extremists tried to kill him. But with the Depression, the power of Big Business and the Rich was considerably reduced. Though they clamored and screamed the standard Wolf Cry, (i.e., that Roosevelt's controls on Big Business would ruin the country's commercial and industrial power, thereby causing even further losses in employment) Roosevelt was powerful enough to overcome this opposition — no mean feat considering that many Supreme Court Justices, as life appointees of previous Administrations, were apparently as keen as Big Business to thwart all social reforms proposed by Roosevelt, attempting frequently to call them unconstitutional.

No doubt, at least, some of the proponents of freedom for Big Business were genuinely of the opinion that it was unconstitutional to control it. Roosevelt, however, felt that the constitution was not intended to invite injustice; that it was to be used progressively, in its spirit. The controversy was to continue over future decades.

In the meanwhile, at home, Roosevelt also attempted to uplift the morale of the nation. He gave "fireside chats" on the radio. He presented Fala, his terrier, for national warmth — no doubt to inspire Nixon in future years. Borrowing from Thoreau, he said, "We have nothing to fear but fear itself". Now convinced that the Hoover-Big Business Show Biz Campaign of building nationalism was required at this stage, he acceded to N.R.A., a massive program of free entertainment put together by his aides, in which Show Business was very keen and willing to participate.

Morale boosting was undoubtedly important now, and no doubt this program played a useful role in uplifting the mood of the country. But it was unfortunately to lead to grave and tragic consequences, as the marriage between Washington and Hollywood was to grow with each succeeding decade, especially after World War 2. And while Roosevelt firmly voiced himself against Big Business excesses, as well as those of Organized Labor (the annoyed Unions were to vote for Republican Wilkie against Roosevelt in 1940), the Unions did pick up the trend with powerful show biz propaganda of their own. There now came to be developed many shows — of good and bad quality — proclaiming the virtues of various unions.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor pulled America into the War. There are sources that claim that Roosevelt had known of the impending Japanese attack (aside from the bungled code message) after trade negotiations had failed, but had kept the information secret in order to draw America into the War. There is no conclusive proof that this was so. Roosevelt had been attempting to get Congress leadership and the country towards active participation; Churchill had successfully convinced Roosevelt of this from their first meeting; even more importantly wily Churchill had won many Americans over emotionally with his moving oratory — and by carefully stressing the American antecedents of his mother in his speeches. Nevertheless, it was not until the Pearl Harbor attack in December 1941 that the U.S. formally entered the War against the Axis powers.

(iii)

The War, like World War 1, was to provide a tremendous boost for the American economy. American production worked over capacity on the war-time footing, ensuring total employment. The distance from Japan and Germany prevented the American mainland from suffering any physical damage after Pearl Harbor. Unlike Europe, therefore, America came out of the War with a skyrocketing economy. Though the cost of living was to rise from the base of 100 in 1939, to 175 by 1948, and was to grow steadily over the years, producing not merely for domestic but European and Asian markets had boosted American manufacture to a very healthy level. The boom continued, and from the end of the War in 1945 to 1950, national per capita income increased by an unprecedented 25%. Though Big Business had violently opposed Roosevelt's "socialistic" controls, and warned of terrible disasters, in fact the economy had improved steadily under such controls and then boomed at the end of the War. Many economists were now applauding the Roosevelt system, and many admitted that one of the important causes of the Great Depression had been the extremely unequal distribution of wealth and purchasing power. In 1929, 36,000 households had had income equal to over 11,000,000 other families. And these studies were at best, only a vague measure of America's poor — those, that is, who were measured at all.

Big Business appeared to have learnt its lesson from this too, and in the post War economic boom, even during the inevitable pockets of recession, there were efforts made to ensure that there were more jobs and education facilities for the returning GIs. Roosevelt had not lived to see the fruition of his efforts — he had died before the formal surrender of Japan and Germany. Dresden, that beautiful city of art and culture, known to have no military bases, had been deliberately bombarded to smithereens, to destroy life and morale of the German people. Now, President



Truman's decision to let the Atom Bomb be used at Hiroshima and Nagasaki devastated Japan and put a gruesome end to that War. And all the unfortunate Japanese Americans who had been rounded up and placed in internment camps in the Mojave Desert all through the War, were now finally to be released to start their lives again — at least those that had survived the internment.

There was something strange in the way Truman had become Vice President. In 1940, Franklin Roosevelt was elected to serve a third term in office; then a fourth term, in 1944. No President, before or since, has served more than two terms (the 22nd Amendment of 1950 was to ensure that).

But then, no President before or since has wielded as much power, or enjoyed as much popularity, as Roosevelt did towards the end of World War 2. Despite this, his choice of a Vice-President in 1944 was successfully opposed by the Democratic Party leadership; Roosevelt, from many accounts, wanted his incumbent Vice-President, Henry Wallace, to continue. But the political powers selected Harry S. Truman, Senator from Missouri, as the VP. A few months later Roosevelt died, and Truman, the former haberdasher of very poor schooling, (and reported underworld connections) was the new President at a very critical period in world history.

It was Truman who set up NATO, the Marsall Aid Plan for Europe and the Four-Point Plan for Asia. The U.S. was not merely the most powerful nation on earth now, it was also the most loved and respected, even in Asia and Africa. At the U.N., formed with great emotions in 1945, the U.S. ruled. It was able even to get agreement that in that democratic body of nations, the U.S., U.K., France, Russia and China should be equal but superior, with veto power.

But there were also several momentous decisions that Truman made in his term of office, which future historians may see in a different light from the commentators of our times who have almost cannonized him. He decided to use the Atom Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan, at a time when Japan was ready to capitulate; the horrors that inflicted on the inhabitants of these two towns can never be really measured by a headcount of those killed: the Bomb killed several thousands instantly, many thousands were to die later, and many more thousands who survived death were to be maimed, in one way or another, for the rest of their lives.

To appease the growing hysteria generated by his Republican opponents in the Cold War with the communists, Truman was to launch a "police action" (under the umbrella of the United Nations) against Communist takeover in Korea; he did stop short of invading China, however, as General McArthur wanted (he fired MacArthur on the issue); but he channelled funds to the French in their battle to retain Indo-China. In effect he set the pattern of American policy — which was to be carried to extreme in the Eisenhower regime — of involvement in any part of the world where communism might thrive; it was the Truman Doctrine that communism was a threat to the security of the United States in any part of the globe. He was the ultimate pragmatist, and as many have said, no doubt he had to take a strong anti-communist stand for political survival in the Cold War hysteria that was enveloping the nation.

And it was Truman who signed the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) into being.

It was also Truman who ignored, then over-ruled, the severe objections of Oppenheimer, the brilliant scientist who have developed the Atom Bomb, and who after it was made, felt as Mary Shelley's Dr. Frankenstein had about his monster. Since then, Oppenheimer and the atomic research General Advisory Commission he chaired, had strongly argued against any further research and the development of the Hydrogen Bomb. But then there was the artful and intensely ambitious Edward

Teller a scientist who had worked under Oppenheimer, and who was later to testify so suggestively against Oppenheimer that the latter's patriotism was in question and he was debarred from access to his own laboratories. Teller made friends with the Military, the major defence suppliers; he was to win support by his thesis *Learning To Love The Bomb*. To those who had objections, that were, to use his own words "merely moral", Teller suggested the peaceful use of the Hydrogen Bomb — to create huge chasms in the earth and reach gas supplies (attempts were even to be made later to try this; the area bombed was found to be too radioactive to use for any purpose). For those who did not have objections that were "merely moral", Teller sold the economy of the Bomb. It could, he said, kill 10,000,000 a try, or just 12 cents per body, far more economical than any other weaponry.

Truman over-ruled Oppenheimer and the GSA, and ordered that Teller should be provided with his own research facilities in California. After some faulty starts — Teller's calculations had to be corrected by other scientists — the first Hydrogen Bomb was successfully tested in 1952. "It's a boy" said Teller. It was a thousand times more destructive than the Atom Bomb. A year later, Russia followed up with its own Hydrogen Bomb test. The nuclear race was on.

But in many ways, Truman's most significant decision was with regard to the creation of Israel. Shortly after becoming President, he was reported to have told the Arab Ambassadors to the U.S. who called on him, "I'm sorry, gentlemen, but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are anxious for the success of zionism. I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my constituents".

(iv)

For those interested to know the facts preceding the creation of Israel, enough has been written by conscientious writers, from the time of the Zionist Congress in 1897 through various British White Papers and other attempts to placate both sides with contradictory assurances, the accelerated migration to Palestine of large numbers of Jews, the growing American role, the illegal further mass migration, the smuggling of arms to the extremist factions of these immigrants, the clashes, the hasty withdrawal set to end the British mandate.

However righteous the cause of the Palestinians, in being uprooted from their homes of centuries, it would appear that the forced partition of Palestine, into a Jewish State on one side and a smaller Palestinian State on the other, with Jerusalem as the International Zone, may have been the best pragmatic, if not the most moral solution, if it could have been *amicably* settled. After all, Jews did deserve a homeland after what German Jewry had been through, even if less than half of the world's Jews apparently wanted to live in Israel. The Arabs were furious, of course, the Palestinians blinded with rage at this division of their homeland; they argued that it was the Romans who had made the Jews homeless, that the Jews had chosen to move to various parts of the world, that the Arabs (including the Palestinians) had fought for the Allies against even their own Ottoman Empire in World War 1, and against the Nazis in World War 2.

In 1947, the United Nations Special Committee had been convened to discuss a partition of Palestine, one to be a Jewish state, the other that of Muslims and Christian Palestinians and an international Jerusalem zone. President Truman backed it with muscle. Drew Pearson, the syndicated columnist, reported that Truman called Acting



Secretary of State Lovell to the White House “warning him he would demand full explanation if nations which usually lined up with the United States failed to do so on Palestine”.

It worked. The Partition Resolution was passed. The Palestinians and other Arabs refused to acknowledge it. So the Zionists increased their attacks; and clashes continued. British installations and government buildings were bombed. Most independent reports (including those of British officers) confirm that by early 1948, Arab villages and towns were soon being set on fire, and mass killings were threatened, sometimes carried out. Haifa fell to the Zionists on April 22, entirely emptied of all Arabs. In Den Yasir and Jaffe, there were tales of unbelievable brutality. “In Jaffe, I saw what I never expected to see” said Sir Horatio Murray (in the 1978 BBC documentary *The Palestinians*).

By the time the British Mandate ended on May 12, 1948, the British law enforcement forces were fleeing — along with the Palestinians — to save themselves. On May 14, 1948 the Zionist leadership announced the State of Israel. Sixteen minutes after that announcement, the United States recognized it.

It was presidential election year in the U.S. All year, polls showed that Republican Dewey would easily win; Truman had been an unpopular caretaker President. So certain were the political observers of the results, that the *Chicago Tribune* printed the Dewey victory for its morning edition, despite the fact that an amazing surge in voting for Truman had been reported.

Truman was in fact elected by the narrowest of margins.

In the meanwhile, the neighboring Arab states to which the surviving Palestinians had fled, were waking up from their squabbles with one another (the newly created Arab states were quarreling among themselves regarding boundaries and leadership). Some now grouped together and declared war on Israel to reclaim Palestine for the Palestinians. And were promptly defeated, losing, in the bargain, a lot more land to Israel.

Britain first protested at the methods used to create the State of Israel. But in 1950 it recognized Israel.

“Our problem” recalled Evans Wilson of the U.S. State Dept under Truman (in the 1978 BBC documentary *The Palestinians*), “was one of ignorance”.

It could have been ignorance, along with some other factors. The U.S. was still very new in knowing the world and its people, new also in its position of world leadership. There was — as the documents of the time reveal as do the writings of Ben Gurien and Chaim Weismann before him — fierce political pressure applied upon the U.S. President as there had been upon the British in the past. Polls of the time also reveal that the U.S. public did not want a mass migration of European Jewry to the U.S. which may well have been another consideration. There was obviously the important pragmatic consideration of having a friendly obligated Jewish State in the vital Oil and Suez region. And, there was that interpretation of the Biblical prophesy...

Above all, there was — in the U.S. as in other parts of the world — a genuine horror at the Nazi atrocities upon the Jew, the gnawing feeling that not enough had been done to somehow control it, the desire now to atone for that by providing the Jews with a homeland they so fervently desired. The Zionist Congress, since 1898, had entreated for one. Argentina, Turkey and Uganda had been requested at various stages by the Jews, but clearly their hearts — at least of those who wished to migrate — were in the Middle East.



In these circumstances, the Palestinians were not a people in their homeland, but an obstruction to a satisfactory solution.

Much of U.S. media had already played an important role in the creation of Israel. Some journalists were themselves emotionally charged, others no doubt saw career benefits, as so many would do in future years, when U.S. media's role became even more dominant. The War years, the emerging Cold War had made propaganda entirely justifiable. Presenting some of the facts while suppressing others, using advertising copy style for image-making were tactics that were already highly successful, as the growing Luce empire bore witness.

Periodically the best in U.S. journalism surfaced, as it always had. But now with the U.S. as world leader and the influence of U.S. media spread across the globe, the question, more vital than ever, should have been: what constitutes press freedom? Can media empires become so powerful that they can decide what the public should know and what it should not?

For reasons of national security, obviously there is need for commonsense rules. When a destructive force or a grave emergency *genuinely* becomes a threat to the nation or when the nation is at War, there can be reasons for propaganda and for suppressing some of the facts. But from now on, the U.S. would face real danger not from such eventualities but from fanatics and exploiters — in media and in politics — as the Cold War and neo-colonialism were entrenched.

They would seem to be acting in the national interest but, all too often, they would be very damaging to the nation.

The American public, ecstatic over the end of the War, American victory and its new role as world leader, above all, with the end of the Great Depression to a new thrust in "upward mobility", was too involved to be concerned with these issues, except to think and feel as their political and media favorites told them they should.

## *The Ugly Fifties*

(i)

What did place an icy chill on post-War euphoria for most Americans, was the fear of yet another World War, from the Cold War (the term was coined by Churchill) that now existed with Russia, and soon with China as that country went communist under Mao.

During the liberation of Europe from the Axis, there had apparently been heated arguments with the Europeans about the tactics for such liberation. British strategists (recalling the facts in a 1981 BBC documentary on Churchill), said they had tried to get Eisenhower to commence liberation with the Allied forces from Eastern Europe, so as to thwart Russian influence there. Eisenhower, however, had insisted on using the American plan; as a possible result of this, Eastern Europe was now under Soviet control, because Russia had liberated Eastern Europe.

There is no doubt that the communists were intent on the spread of their ideology to all the world. The one appeal that communism had, was the instant equality it offered to the exploited lower classes. The Russian people had *not* taken communism as their ideology when they revolted and ousted the corrupt Czar Nicholas II, in 1917; it was not a "proletariat" revolution but the revolution of all classes, including the intellectuals and even many of the aristocracy. The reign of Nicholas, like some of his predecessors, had been brutal and ruthless. Since Peter The Great (enthralled with European style society but who abhorred religion), and Catherine The Great (who would certainly belong in the Guinness Book of Records, if anyone could have kept track of the number of lovers she had), feudalism of the most ignominious kind had prevailed in Russia.

When the Czar was first forced to sign reforms in the revolution of 1905, (which he did but never implemented) then forced to abdicate in 1917, (he was to be killed by the Bolsheviks in 1918), the government chosen was a social democratic system, first under Prince Lvov, then under Kerensky.

Lenin had watched the Russian uprising from Switzerland, come to take over, did not succeed at first, finally overthrew the Kerensky government, and after the Civil War that followed for two years (in which the Allies sided with the Czarists) declared the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, "the dictatorship of the proletariat", abolished private property and set up the new Economic Policy of The Communist Party to aid the masses of starving peasantry.

Lenin sold Marxism to the Russian people through the example of the horrors, they had themselves suffered, under the Czars' Europeanized feudalism (Nicholas II

frequently ordered his soldiers to open fire upon the literally starving masses when they marched), the excesses of the monarchies in Europe, the "imperialistic" capitalism of the democracies (U.S.); he hated religion, citing what had happened through the Church in Europe. And the Russians knew what Rasputin had done. The United States' own involvement in aiding the "whites" in the ensuing Civil War, was yet another telling argument against Democracy.

If the U.S., therefore, had kept its image of a government of the people, itself in origins more "proletariate" than any, and if the lot of the working man and woman in the U.S. had been better than it had been made in that era, is it possible that the Russians would have evolved an American style democracy?

But the U.S. policy makers had not identified with the Russian revolutionary cause, even *before* the Bolsheviks' brutal excesses and genocide. In an attitude that was a throwback to the Hamiltonian attitude towards the French revolutionaries, the U.S. sided with the monarchies of Europe to restore Czarist monarchy during the Russian Civil War — or at least so it would have seemed to the Russian people. It was the Allies who enhanced Lenin's appeal to the Russian people.

(ii)

Now, after World War 2, Congressman Richard Nixon chased suspected communist spies, labelling opposition as "soft on communism" or even "pinkos", when they occasionally objected to his excesses. From the very outset, there were some peculiar aspects to that chase. The impact of movie plots and emphasis was now clearly known to the more astute politicians like Nixon, far more than to the general public. The House Committee on unAmerican Activities (of which Mr. Nixon was a member), was examining plots of movies in which bankers, senators and other "establishment" figures were portrayed as "heavies" or bad guys. Such plots raised suspicions of communist sympathies against the makers of the film. There were some remarkable conclusions drawn about movies that fell under suspicion; for instance, *None But The Lonely Heart*, it was revealed later, was subjected to close scrutiny because *The Hollywood Reporter*, a Hollywood daily, in its review of the film had "found the picture pitched in a low key... moody and sombre throughout in the Russian manner." And Harburg (Lyricist of *Buddy Can You Spare a Dime* and other hits) later spoke of the sufferings of those involved in the production of the song *Happiness is a thing called Joe*, because some in the House Committee were convinced that it was written to boost Joe Stalin!

In the witch-hunts, black-listings and hysteria that was to follow for over a decade, many hundreds of innocent Americans, in all walks and levels of life, were to be ruined, but two national heroes would emerge. Richard Nixon (soon to be Vice-President) and Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin (a third, Ronald Reagan was still an actor, waiting behind the Silver Screen). And it was all to become possible because the country was beginning to be controlled by what was to be the most powerful lethal weapon on the human mind — the new medium of Television. Not that TV was a culprit *per se*. Its power could have been used to great purpose. But it was commercial in the U.S.; being commercial, it aimed, like many newspapers and magazines, to seek sensationalism as a means to draw large audiences. For the con artists and the exploiters in politics, that was the ideal setting. The climate of dark suspicions, paranoia and extremism of the time that followed is better understood if



we briefly review the complex social conditions first, the grip on national, even international thought, by magazines such as Henry Luce's *Time*, *Life*, *Fortune* and the control that Television was, from now on, to have on the American public.

(iii)

The newspaper empires of Hearst, McCormick, Lawson, Knight, Chandler, Ochs, Sulzberger, Meyer-Graham, Newman continued to grow; they were nowhere near the mammoth size they were to become in years ahead, nor as singleminded and sophisticated in propaganda as they would become. They all continued to be dominated from the top. Occasionally, small and independent newspapers broke through for truth and unpopular causes; sometimes reporters, even from within the umbrella of the press lords, stood up for principles even at the cost of careers; mainly, however, the power of the mighty, such as William Randolph Hearst, enveloped the nation and everyone knew it. Yellow journalism thrived more than ever. William Randolph Hearst's newspapers appealed to the millions who read them, unabashedly through chauvinism and sensationalism, often with the use of incendiary tactics. But Hearst himself, with his grotesque castle-ranch and his Hollywood mistress and his connection with the high and mighty, was seen as very upper class, an American feudal lord to be respected and admired.

Enormous, though the power of these press lords was, it was dwarfed by what was now emerging. Television would soon dominate, then saturate the American mind but now the "news magazine", in which the news was rewritten and slanted had become the vogue. Its power was much greater because it provided not just raw news, but news analysed with a built-in point of view. It did the thinking for the reader. The *Reader's Digest* and *Time* magazine were between them to virtually saturate America and much at the English speaking world; where they would not reach in the future, their imitators would. The *Reader's Digest* sought to appeal to the masses at a level only slightly higher than the yellow-journalistic newspapers.\* *Time* aimed for them and the educated. Both magazines became phenomenal successes and in many ways, before TV became the all-consuming power it became in later years, it can be said that these two magazines set the course of American thoughts, events, and future history.

Both eulogized America, Big Business, were bitterly anti-communist. Both used the correct marketing principle of employing the most talented writers, the best layout artists, the best paper and printing. But while *Reader's Digest* was to become and stay for many years (until another magazine of the same hue, *TV Guide*, was to overtake it) the U.S.'s largest circulated periodical, it was *Time* which carried the

\* "Although *Time* was more skillfully written and appealed to a more sophisticated audience, and the *Reader's Digest* was a purveyor of mass culture along with its rightward slant, the two were complementary and had more similarities than differences. Both were owned and actively controlled by religious people of evangelical inclination (Both Wallace and his wife were the children of Presbyterian ministers). Both magazines were marred by factual errors, exaggerations and inventions which did not trouble the proprietors ... both were not above deception, *Time* in purporting to be a newsmagazine, *RD* in claiming to be a digest of other magazines when in fact it quietly 'planted' pieces of its own manufacture in other publications in order to go through the rigmarole of buying back and 'digesting' them" says Swanberg (*Luce and His Empire*).

John Bainbridge (in *Little Wonder*, 1946) said that *Reader's Digest* had a "perfect understanding of the herd mind".

greater power through its written word and through its boss, Harry Luce; it would from now on dominate America, its political process and its destiny, directly and through imitators. It is for this reason that we must take a closer look at *Time*, and even more closely at its owner. Luce has been admitted by friend and foe alike to have masterminded all of *Time's* thinking from the time he came to be the sole force behind it until his death in 1967 — after that his thinking had become the institution. It can be said that Luce made — if not pioneered — the use of semantic warfare and “photo-journalism” into a lethal weapon of propaganda.

It was Luce and those who took after him who would always raise the agonizing questions in the minds of thinkers: Just what can be legitimately considered “freedom of the press” in a society which is not sophisticated enough to know the difference between facts and embellishment, honest analysis and deliberate distortions, viewpoint and propaganda?

Henry Robinson Luce was born in China to missionary parents, in 1898. He was therefore only two years old at the time of the Boxer Rebellion.\*

Contrary to popular belief, Luce did not start *Time* magazine. Britten Hadden, a brilliant Yale graduate, did. Swanberg in *Luce and his Empire* provides the details. Hadden's concept for *Time* came from the then popular *Literary Digest*; the name “Time” from an English magazine of the late nineteenth century edited by an Edmund Yates. Hadden's style for the new *Time* magazine was a witty, irreverent approach, what was later to be called lampooning. He particularly enjoyed treating Big Business with contempt — singling out the tycoons for caricature, such as William Proctor and James Gamble, the soap kings. He employed Luce to look after the business end; he had known Luce at Yale, had always ridiculed him for his fervent worship of Big Business, had finally agreed to take Luce on to manage the end that Luce would be best suited.

Then Hadden died suddenly, at the age of thirty-one. According to the Mr. Swanberg, Britten Hadden dictated and signed a will on his deathbed. He instructed his executor, half-brother Cromwell Hadden, that his own share in *Time* stock (4,461 shares) should not be sold “until the expiration of forty nine years after my death”. Luce had managed, by borrowing from Yale friends, to garner stock but not controlling interest. Hadden's half brother, however, ignored Britten Hadden's death bed instructions; seven months after Britten's death, he sold enough of the shares to Luce to give the latter controlling interest.

Yellow journalism had flourished in the past and continued to do so through other

\* The Boxer Movement of the Chinese proceeded to attack and attempt to drive out the missionaries and the foreign element in China. “Sections of the Chinese melon had been seized by the English, French, Russians, Japanese and Germans. China, with the largest population of any nation, had sunk to the peculiar status of a colony not of one but of many. America, arriving late, had taken no territory, but had demanded every advantage exacted by other nations” writes W.A. Swanberg *Luce And His Empire* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972) “... Angered by the Boxer atrocities, some American missionaries appropriated Chinese mansions and palaces whose owners had fled, looted them and sold their silver and furnishings.... a part of the profits were used for such things as speculation in rice and the purchase of land for a summer residence for missionaries ...” “Sometimes” Mark Twain wrote in the *North American Review* “an ordained minister sets out to be blasphemous. When this happens, the layman is out of the running; he stands no chance”. To missionary replies that they had only followed local custom, Twain rejoined that the Commandment should be revised to read “Thou shalt not steal — except when it is the custom of the country”. The missionary defence that they had taken in indemnity only a little more than the value of the mission property destroyed, Twain likened to the girl who, reproached for having an illegitimate baby, said “But it is such a little one”.

journals. But Luce added something that was to become an integral part of news reporting for many in the world of journalism. Luce claimed to have fervent belief in Christian evangelism but he added his own other fervors to it too: he felt that Christianity, Big Business and the United States were a form of collective diety; each must be glorified as an integral part of the whole, and blanket the earth like a benediction. In later years, his mother was reported to have expressed great concern for his soul.

He believed that his magazine empire must fervently propagate his own beliefs. When facts did not agree with his editorial views, he simply changed the facts.

Once he had control of *Time* magazine, after Hadden's death, he proceeded to implement changes. Big Business began to be adulated, with business magnets gracing the *Time* cover in turn. Advertising revenues soared. In 1929, the year Hadden died, *Time* had sixteen covers of business tycoons. Then he launched *Fortune* magazine. *Time* announced the new magazine as proclaiming "the generally accepted commonplace that America's great achievement has been business".

It is impossible to imagine what the American founders would have said to that. But Luce himself, in a 1928 magazine piece, had described the American constitution as obsolete and called for "a new form of government".

Just what kind of government he most admired was soon apparent. *Time* showered Italian Fascist Dictator Mussolini with praise. In March 1928 at Rochester, New York, Luce had said "The outstanding national moral leader in the world today is Mussolini". Swanberg in his monumental work (*Luce and his Empire*) provides an abundance of quotes from Luce's *Time* magazine, a few of which we might consider here.

Mussolini adorned *Time's* cover many times. Mussolini was "rubicand, jovial, beaming"; Stalin's "facial features suggested cruelty — a hard mask of oriental ruthlessness" and Stalin was always "shabbily dressed"; he was "a cold-blooded man of deeds, uneducated in manner"; Russia had suffered great losses — 20,000,000 lives in the Great War, fighting with the Allies but to *Time* magazine the Russian orphans from the war "abound like alley cats", "become skilled pickpockets and moral degenerates".

It was Mussolini, in fact, who was now to cold-bloodedly invade Ethiopia, and responsible historians have all agreed that this attack proved to both him and Hitler that Axis expansionism would not be checked by the Allies — a belief that eventually led to Hitler's own rampage through Europe. The other green signal to Fascism was provided by the lack of sympathy from the U.S. and Europe towards the people of Spain when Generalissimo Franco and his Phalangists invaded Spain aided by Hitler and Mussolini, and eventually massacred the loyalists who defended their native land, and freedom fighters who came to help.

When Mussolini invaded the totally unprepared Ethiopia, *Time* applauded the "civilizing mission". And *Time* ridiculed the "savage and illiterate" "Ethiopian blackmoors". It emphasized the "fleas, flies and filth" of the country which it called the "hellhole of creation", was amused by its women ("fashionably tallowed with Ethiopian grease") and its cowardly soldiers. "At the first sight of an Italian bombing plane, Ethiopian officers dived for the nearest Red Cross shelter". The Emperor Haile Selasie became "Little Charlie", his son-in-law "terrified" and "bugeyed", and "mounted on a prancing ass"; the people "jabbered and shrieked"; they were screaming "savages", "mud-wallowing savages".

It should be noted that *Time*, the magazine of a Christian zealot, was describing a



Christian country (the first Christian country ever), ruled by a Christian, invaded for no reason at all, except for conquest.

*Time* was to recount the fun and ridicule of Ethiopia and its emperor from *George White's Scandals* ("Boys, our country am menaced! What is we go in do"? Then he tap dances!).

In the meanwhile, the real-life Haile Selassie shed tears addressing the League of Nations; he said that the Big Powers might feel now that by allowing Abyssinnia (Ethiopia) to be brutally invaded and taken, they had lost nothing. But they were wrong. They would soon learn what Fascism was.

Europe and the U.S. did not care to help the Loyalists in Spain either when they were invaded by Franco and the Falangists. Some individuals did. Media generally did call the Spanish defenders "loyalists". Not so *Time*; to *Time*, the loyalists were "Reds" and Franco's forces were "White". The President of Republican Spain, Manuel Azana, was "frog faced, obese and blotchy". Spain's defenders were "largely composed of ill-trained, ill-disciplined shoemakers, cab-drivers and waiters who were only prevented from scattering in despair by their officers standing behind them with cocked firearms". "Meanwhile Generalissimo Franco was exhibiting his other distinctive characteristics: caution, thoroughness, quick decision, forehandedness ... Franco police [these were in fact the invaders] were trimly attired and wore the hard, three-cornered hats which to Spaniards are the normal symbol of law and order. The Generalissimo's program was *Back To Normalcy for Spain*" (italics added). Note the irony: American freedom forces were seen by the British as similarly ridiculous during the American Revolutionary War.

*Time* began with guarded respect and admiration for Hitler in the pre-War days. In 1936, *Time* said "some orations are of definite greatness and the speech of Adolph Hitler to the German Reichstag last week was in that class"; "Even to intelligent Germans it began to seem that the Hitler regime might be useful in getting Germany's necessary international dirty work done". Soon of course, *Time* had to soft-pedal all that.

By this time, the Luce empire included *Time* magazine, printed in U.S., Canada, Europe and Asia; *Life* magazine with 4 million circulation in the U.S. (soon to be over 10 million) and almost half a million abroad (soon to be many millions); *Radio March of Time*, a dramatized version of the news (parts played by actors) heard by 18 million weekly; another was *Time Views The News* (listenership undetermined); *Cinema March of Time* (a movie version of News) which played in 10,000 American and foreign theaters every week; United China Relief, a propaganda organization which was to be very active in future years in getting many billions of dollars for "Nationalist China" to beat communist China; And in 1944, Luce entered the TV arena purchasing 12½% of NBC's Blue Network. Meanwhile, Luce had changed marriage partners. Even as he and wife Lila (she was of a wealthy family) were setting up a large "dream" mansion in New Jersey, he met Clare Booth Brokaw, a divorcee, daughter of a chorus girl, herself an actress as a child, then a playwright.

Luce left his wife, later marrying his new girlfriend; Clair Booth Luce who took on all of Luce's political extremism and with the power of Luce's magazines behind her, was able, in the Eisenhower regime, to garner the Ambassadorship to Italy. Needless to say, her appointment shocked many and created considerable problems in Italy. The entirely inexperienced Clair Booth Luce sailed into Italy with many blunders, then — to the fury of the Italians — even attempted to interfere openly in the internal affairs of that country.

In *Life* magazine, February 17, 1941, Luce had an editorial *The American Century* reiterating much of Luce's *America First* and *Manifest Destiny* beliefs. Then the editorial talked about the U.S. impending entry into World War 2. He emphasized that a person must not be shortsighted in thinking that he should enter the conflict merely to save the English. Far more was at stake; *great new markets for American business and American domination of the world*. "Let us rise to the tremendous possibilities ... in the decades to come, Asia will be worth to us exactly zero — or else it will be worth four, five, ten billions of dollars a year" said Luce in that editorial.

It should be noted that these sentiments for the opportunities available to the U.S. in world leadership and world markets were being stated *before* Pearl Harbor. Freda Kirchway, writing in *The Nation*, had this to say about "Luce Thinking", "Sounds nice doesn't it ... 'Manifest destiny' 'Anglo-Saxon justice' 'The White Man's burden' ... [This] brand of imperialism should be investigated by the Federal Trade Commission and a cease-and-desist order issued before the public can be poisoned".

She was too sanguine. It became instead the U.S. foreign policy shortly after the War.

Even before the Cold War was set in motion, Luce had thundered invectives and contempt on everything Russian. But that was mild compared to what the more experienced post-war Luce could do. At the end of the war, Luce travelling in the Far East announced "The American frontier is no longer Malibu Beach; the American frontier is along Okinawa-Manilla — and it will never be moved back from here".

The Cold War and anti-communist hysteria received Luce's extremely powerful support through his media empire; Nixon and Dulles were the glorious heroes; Dulles' foreign policy of expansionism into Asia found lyrical praise from Luce. With China gone 'communist, despite all his own efforts on behalf of his friend Chiang Kai-Shek (and all the hundreds of millions he caused to be poured to Nationalist China despite its open corruption), Luce wanted no "co-existence"; he wanted War: "War to the finish, NOW!" (Dec. 18, '50) "Does It Make Sense To Use the Bomb On The Soviet Union Now?" asked *Life* (Jan. 8, '51) then answered the question: "In view of the declared enmity of communist China to seize and dominate all Asia, *Life* sees no choice but to acknowledge the existence of war with Red China and to set about its defeat in full awareness that this course will probably involve war with the Soviet Union as well". Russia, it might be noted, also had The Bomb, and was, at the time, a close ally of communist China.

"Our terms for co-existence" said *Time* March 24, 1952 "are ... very flat. The communist imperialism and totalitarianism of the Stalin regime are intolerable. They must be replaced and their sign and seal, the Iron Curtain, removed". From May 1951 onwards, *Life* often outlined how the battles would be fought and won (e.g. Eisenhower himself will direct operations in the Central Area).

Luce had always been fervently for American involvement in Indo-China, first in support of the French and then in support of the Nixon-Dulles policy to thwart the elections in Vietnam and thereby keep the communists from being elected (as they would certainly have been otherwise). *Life* told readers that France "urgently need arms from the U.S. and the clear-cut support of American policy makers" on Indo-China; "... The first political fact of life about Indo-China today is keeping Indo-China out of communist hands".

Luce's excesses occasionally caused riots and international incidents, with several countries, including South American neighbors. *Time* once wrote in its denunciation that we should "abolish Bolivia and let its neighbors divide that country". It caused a



major riot in Bolivia by some 10,000 angry citizens, the stoning of the U.S. embassy, and a firm denial by the unnamed "U.S. officials" who *Time* said it had quoted. Franklin Roosevelt, whom *Time* had continued to depict in the worst light through the years, once voiced his anger at *Time* in a press conference, following a fierce Chilean protest when *Time* had written an account about Chilean President Aguirre Cerda (not a friend of American Big Business), in which among other things, *Time* said "he spent more and more time with the red wine he cultivates". In his press conference, in November 1941, Roosevelt said "The Government of the United States has been forced to apologize — to the Government of Chile for an article written in *Time* magazine — a disgusting lie that appeared in that magazine ... we are informed by our Ambassador that this article was a notable contribution to Nazi propaganda against the United States....".

In the Eisenhower regime, Luce was a hero, however, and could fry anyone who did not agree with Dulles. A Luce memo Sept. 18, 1953 (from which a *Time* article was evolved Sept. 27, 53) said this in part: "The significance of Dulles is now clear. He is the champion of the proposition that politics (including international politics) has something to do with morals and that morals has something to do with God. This proposition is revolting to Nehru [Indian Prime Minister] and Nehru the atheist has now defiled the significance of Dulles by accusing him (and the whole anti-Communist effort) of possessing 'an element of dogmatic fervor, resembling the old approach of bigoted religion'".

By the 1950s, it had become common practice for Luce to brief his staff in talks and through memoranda on his political beliefs, and for them to then work out articles to back that belief. Some of the foreign correspondents were furious at the way their reports were distorted blatantly by head office editing. Three resigned. Theodore White (who later wrote the best sellers on presidential elections) left when his reports from China were rewritten by the *Time* head office because they were found to be not sufficiently anti-communist and not sufficiently pro-Chiang Kai Shek.

Some of the more responsible foreign correspondents became collectively outraged at the manner in which their reports were being changed in substance by the Foreign News Editor; Wertenbaker (Paris) specified instances of "distortions of which we believe to be the truth". Graebner (London) listed instances where distortions and exaggerations to "ram home to the reader that Russia was a hell of a big problem". Osborne (Rome) cited stories published that were "glaringly off base", the practice of "lifting isolated facts". Hersey (Russia) charged "editorial bias that was grossly unfair" even "vicious", contents of cabled reports "torn from the context .... and put into new context of *Time's* editorial bias".

Goldborough and Wittiker Chambers (two of Luce's handpicked Foreign News Editors) were fanatically anti-communists, willing to do anything for Luce, for the "cause" or for their own careers. Many of the handpicked men and women reporters and researches fell into the same mold. One of them, Penn Kimple, saw himself as an advertising copywriter: "I see my assignments in these terms" he told *New York Post* (Dec. 24, 1956). "This is the angle, this is the product, and we want to sell it to this particular audience ... The ones who cracked under the strain" he added "were the ones who were somehow trying to beat the system".

"No writer seems to have resigned because an unusually honest and dedicated politician had been unfairly treated. To editors trained from the beginning in this journalism of irresponsibility, it had become as much a part of their lives as the production of Westerns by Hollywood cowboys, and the creation of television



cosmetic commercials by advertising specialists" wrote Swanberg. (*Luce And His Empire*). "A strong case could be made that America's disastrous Asian policy after 1949 was in large part due to years of Luce press propaganda. One of the few who ever taxed Luce to his face for Machiavellism was Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church. At a meeting of church leaders in a Time conference room, Dr. Blake in front of others, denounced Luce as a 'Christian of questionable sincerity'. There was one other devout Christian who was reported through the years to pray for his soul, which she felt was in danger. That was his mother. And, to Luce's embarrassment and anger, he was roundly criticized in a TV panel program in December 1964 in San Francisco; Felix Greene the British writer and China expert ("A Curtain of Ignorance") was also on the panel. 'American newspapers and news magazines are responsible for the American public being uninformed on what is really going on inside communist China' he said and then turning to Luce 'There are no publications which have done more damage in American-Chinese relations than those of the gentleman now on this stage ... Western embassies in Peking hand around the latest copies of *Time* and *Life* to see the extraordinary things said about the country'.

"*Time* was neither the newsmagazine it purported to be nor a magazine of open opinion. The whole secret of its power lay in its concealed opinion — propaganda. Astonishingly, to most readers, the Luce press dispensed news rather than propaganda. Even the small percentage who knew perfectly well they were reading propaganda ... were falling into the propagandist trap when they felt easily able to discount it."

To the public at large, Luce was a man with passionately held views, who had amassed great riches and power; in so doing he *must* know a lot. They were willing to be led by him, especially when what he propagated was the God-intended superiority of the American and the Anglo Saxon as the ultimate in creation. Even Europe was smitten, and Asians — ironically — looked upon readership of *Time*, *Life*, *Fortune* as a status symbol, even carefully blinding their minds to the ridicule and ugly image of themselves that the magazine invariably carried and *never* asking themselves: if *our* image is so distorted, could not *all* the news be distorted?

Luce had great adoration for European aristocracy, to whom he valiantly added the rich American, the Rich American Businessmen. It was a marriage that was remarkably successful under his handling and that of others who shared his view, especially with post-War Europe reduced to destitution and hungry for the American Dollar. In this framework, the only Asia that fitted was a primitive, starving, weird Asia — the "White man's burden." *Time* and *Life* magazines did all they could to project this image in fostering the "cousinly link" with Europe.

*Time's* Managing Editor, Matthews, wrote in "Names And Addresses", "Is journalism really necessary? ... Journalism was really a part of the entertainment business". It was clearly the approved policy of *Time* magazine. Later, however, Matthews was to voice disapproval of some of *Time's* excesses because he felt that *Time* had crossed the outer limits: "The distortions, suppressions and slanting of its political news seem to me to pass the bounds of politics and to commit an offence against the ethics of journalism".

There had never been any major hue and cry against Luce's type of journalism from other media; perhaps because they did not wish to seem hostile to a very successful format, or perhaps because major newspapers and magazines, owned also by large corporations, were — editorially — not displeased with Luce's highly successful effort to make Big Business, God, and America sacrosanct.

Initially, the *Time* writing style (Timestyle) had drawn a lot of criticism, laughter and contempt (especially in Britain) from professionals. Sir John Ervine wrote that in *Time* magazine, "adjectives were used as verbs, and nouns are telescoped to such an extent that a sentence looks like a railway accident". London's Cassandra called it "as vile a piece of mangling as ever stripped the heart out of prose". In the U.S., Marshall McLuhan felt "Nobody could tell the truth in Timestyle" and Westbrook Begler called it "a nervous disease of the typewriter".

When Mrs. Mary Bancroft, of the *Wall Street Journal* family, extremely distressed at reading Luce's "American Century" editorial, sent it to Wertenbaker in Paris (he had by now resigned from *Time*), he responded "I sympathize with your reaction... After reading it and retaining my lunch, I looked hard at the picture and I said to myself, said I: That man is sick".

The American public, however, did not think he was sick. Luce's views reached, and were avidly absorbed by, at least a third of the American public, through one or more of his operations. His magazines were very well packaged, the best paper, the best quality of photography and printing; there were all the names of the many foreign correspondents and editors; excellent graphics; they produced a digest of news; they masticated it and all the public needed to do was swallow it. His visual media was even easier to swallow. If some noticed the bias, they were presumably not offended or disturbed; Luce glorified America and American destiny as world rulers; the arguments were persuasive on the various items of news; if that reporting of news was highly selective, and the naming of sources missing, above all, the frequent policy of *Time* to put words suited to its editorial policy into the mouths of anonymous sources, it did not apparently bother too many readers. Timestyle was to become an integral part of American journalism, of English writing in general. The enormous success of *Time* produced other "news magazines."

Perhaps the most improbable platonic friendship Luce formed was with Mary Bancroft. She was just the type with whom the successful Luce yearned to be friendly. Attractive, of a wealthy American family, educated in Europe and now residing in Switzerland, she was an accepted member of Europe's upper crust. But she was also very intelligent, of genuine adherence to the original American principles, and she spoke her mind when they met (occasionally) and wrote it (frequently). She despaired of the friendship, but was apparently coaxed by right-minded friends not to break it off; somehow, they felt, her influence could modify his extremism, and with it, the poison he was spreading upon the minds of millions of readers.

Mary Bancroft minced no words throughout the fifteen years that she knew him. She showered contempt and ridicule upon him, tore his political "philosophy" to smithereens, called him stupid often, yet Luce, the autocrat who terrorized his own staff and politicians everywhere (especially after World War 2), took it all docilely with only occasional protests. "A large part of the Bancroft-Luce correspondence leveled explicit criticism at the Luce press for misinformation, quasi-information, fictionisation and a general lack of sense of responsibility" writes Mr. Swanberg, who interviewed Mary Bancroft for his book and obtained permission to use some of the correspondence. "I wonder if I could perhaps find a worthwhile outlet for my talents... by forming some kind of international organization with headquarters at Geneva in connection with your soul. There is a fairly large group who feels that your soul is in danger" she once wrote to Luce.

She often tore sheets from *Time* and *Life*, marked out what she knew to be distortions and suppression of facts and sent them on to him. Once she wrote,



disagreeing with *Time's* claim that the U.S. has not, and cannot have, a master race complex or a 'law giver' complex "I have heard the exact opposite opinion in Europe" she wrote, "Americans there, for instance in West Germany, behave and talk exactly like a 'master race' — are often referred to as having caught the illness from the Nazis".

She warned about the enormous power that the Luce press had even over Europeans. She cited a case of an Englishwoman who had recently told her "All I know, I learn from *Time*, *Life* and *Reader's Digest*".

And the remarkable Mary Bancroft attacked him even on what was a sacred issue with him: "You know, Harry, if I were an editor I would save my ardor and crusades for within the U.S.A. ... You know, lead by example. 'Look Homeward Angel' — 'People In Glass Houses' ..I disapprove of telling Americans how wonderful they are and for the following reasons: 1) It drives the real wonderful Americans crazy for really wonderful people know just how wonderful they are not; 2) It makes all the smug horrible ones and the arrogant ones more smug and insufferable than ever ... Before God I have no idea whatsoever what "the American Way of Life" is, and I want to know myself — for myself — and so I can answer that absolutely incessant question from Europeans. I have found no Americans who can define it and everyone I ask begins to giggle when I ask them".

She called J. Edgar Hoover (one of his idols) "that Virgin Mary in pants". And she spoke disparagingly about Eisenhower as "Daddy whose abilities were very limited (possibly even stupid)". She sarcastically asked how Americans were to be protecting themselves against communism. "Certainly not by improving or educating yourself. That's ridiculous. Who needs education when they've got know-how, ... thinking everyone who is against us is a communist", "What annoys me most is corruption under the guise of respectability" she wrote "The Republicans aren't Nazis ... What it is as I see it, is that the microbes of the disease are there — the open wound in the American psyche".

Once they took up the question of what constitutes a cultivated man. She named several persons, including Adlai Stevenson as being in her opinion cultivated. Luce asked her bluntly if he — Luce himself — was cultivated. She replied that she thought not. "There ensued a long discussion of cultivation in which he took the stand that being cultivated implied being 'ineffectual'," writes Mr. Swanberg.

In many ways, she was Thomas Jefferson all over again against Luce's Alexander Hamilton. She had genuine breeding and class (which has *nothing* intrinsically to do with a bank balance), and therefore knew the meaning of social responsibility and compassion; whereas Harry Luce, born poor, but with the fierce yearning to become "upper class", worked furiously to achieve what he *thought* was that stature, through adulation of Big Business, Big Money through affluence, and outward manifestations of status, through contempt and scorn for the disenfranchised. At least unconsciously, his claim to superiority through money, through racial, national and religious prejudices, was seen by him (as it was by many powerful Americans through history, and especially during the 1950s) as an indication of "upper class", equated in such minds with the contempt of the aristocracy in feudal times, for the poor and the helpless.

The American Experiment, was in fact, intrinsically woven in the belief that class distinctions based upon the accident of birth, were obscene. Yet Americans like Luce and several powerful forces in politics and media, were to prevail upon the Western Mind, as never before, that superiority through the accident of birth, in race and



nationality, was very American; they waved flags and appealed to the basest instincts in human nature. And it worked.

In future years, many of Luce's ilk would make greater efforts, learning the more subtle aspects of "graceful living", again with the intent to create the outward "upper class" façade. Some would even embrace social causes, on occasion, a few even use terms such as *noblesse oblige*, in classless America. But the difference, the artificiality was always apparent, and distinguishable from the real thing, the real adherents to the American Spirit, nature's nobility.

Significantly, while still at school, Harry Luce had apparently made a conscious decision on what he wanted. He had been astute enough to know that the American Experiment could go in one of two directions. Mr. Swanberg records the recollections of Sudler, one of Luce's few friends at Hotchiss, Connecticut, who occasionally took walks with Luce. "For him [Luce] the purpose of these walks was to sort out the contents of his mind" recalled Sudler, "Was Alexander Hamilton or Thomas Jefferson ultimately right for the American people?" Clearly, Luce came to the conclusion that Hamilton was — for himself and for America.

"What then is the American, this new man?" asked St. John de Crevecoeur at the time of the American Revolution. The answer now would have to be different from what it might have been, certainly different from what Tocqueville had found it in his travels. "America is great because she is good and when America ceases to be good she will cease to be great" he had said. Now the political and media power was enormous and growing. And it was from now on to be in dangerous hands, with tools that could reach and convert the minds of the entire American public, and the world.

Luce died in 1967. Eleven universities had showered honorary degrees upon him with words such as those spoken by the Colgate University president: "You have strikingly demonstrated for our times the compatibility and virtues of responsible journalism in a free society".

In its obituary, *Time* magazine said "few journalists in his time ... strove more conscientiously to see that the facts were presented fairly".

In future years, media techniques were to become more subtle, less obviously blatant, more lethal. *Time* magazine itself would, at least in some ways, become more responsible. In the early 1950s, *Time* magazine was not only to influence print journalism, as practiced and as taught in schools; it was now to point the way for the use of propaganda and the formula for commercial success to the new medium of commercial Television. By virtue of its inherent power as a medium, and its proliferation, commercial TV would, of course, outdistance all other media influence ever known to mankind. Soon, almost 70% of all Americans were to rely on TV as their main — if not only — source of news and knowledge of all kinds.

(iv)

The powers who owned Commercial Radio now came to own the three commercial TV networks as well (the fourth network Dumont was to fold shortly). RCA had been made to divest itself of its "Blue" network while retaining the giant NBC, and the "Blue" network was now ABC under the control of Leonard Goldenson, whose father had been in the movie theater trade. The Paley family who ruled CBS were Jewish immigrants from Kiev, Russia and RCA/NBC's David Sarnoff of a Jewish immigrant family from Minsk, Russia; in fairness, therefore (with

frequent suspicions targeted at Jews for being communists) all the three network bosses had to be outrageous Capitalists to avoid any suspicions. And they were.

As at the time of launching commercial radio networks, corporations had fought for TV controls and monopolies. When the dust had settled, the IT&T/ABC merger was not permitted, CBS and RCA (the NBC parent) had major control on recording and TV set manufacturing respectively, though GE and Westinghouse got in there too. Nepotism and power play were everywhere in the industry; for instance, RCA's Television set technology was made the standard by the Federal Communications Commission, despite opposition from some experts who felt it was not the best system. Significantly, the FCC Chairman left shortly after making the decision to join RCA as Vice-President. Europe and Asia, which did not follow the RCA system were consequently to have far better reception on TV sets than America.

The involvement of the TV networks with Government contracts was an important consideration from the start. RCA's income in 1920 was \$1,000,000. By 1955 its income was to reach \$1,000,000,000, when the late President Johnson (then Senator) referred to RCA as a "key element in our defence structure". According to Mr. Erik Barnouw (*Tube Of Plenty*), Sarnoff of RCA wrote periodically to the Government on possible weaponry and the use of electronics for defence purposes, the use of television as the new "eyes of the Top Command". "He [Sarnoff] aided government anti-communist broadcasting projects, both covert and overt", writes Mr. Barnouw. The other networks were, in this regard, also actively in competition for Government favor.

The primary aim of these sharp business minds was of course to make profits, Insofar as public needs were concerned, no doubt the networks did not want to do any harm, they were eager to participate in propaganda but primarily it was profit, not public needs, that mattered. As business minds, aside from personal desires, *they were required to see it that way*. In John F. Dodge vs. The Ford Motor Company, the Michigan Supreme Court in pronouncing judgement, said it best: "A business corporation is organized and carried on primarily for the profit of the stockholders .... The discretion of the directors is to be exercised in the choice of means to attain to that end and *does not extend to a change in the end itself*."

It was, in many ways, the most critical period in America history, but clearly not recognized as such. The meteoric rise in economic power and world leadership created both euphoria and the dangers of excessive, intoxicated chauvinism. History of the human species is replete with examples of what might be called Nature's classic formula in such circumstances: Group narcissism, complacency, stagnation, decline. The most recent victim of excessive chauvinism stood right across the Atlantic — "Great" Britain ("Rule Britannia" to pals). In the United States, the danger of such chauvinism was even greater.

Americans suffered from a deeply ingrained national inferiority complex vis-a-vis the Europeans, especially the British, not unlike the complex that Asian countries, especially those colonized, suffered. One of the self-destructive manifestations of that disease is irrational and paradoxical extremes — on the one hand a yearning to seek acceptance from those one feels inferior to, and concurrently seek to ridicule *them*; to rationalize rather than to face and try to improve in areas where one is genuinely inferior (quite distinct from the overall complex which is a disease) and claim instead, superiority in all matters indiscriminately, thereby attempting, subconsciously, to bluff oneself and others to believing that those inferior qualities were either unimportant or did not exist at all.



This had, from the very conception of the Republic, been the core of the nation's problem. It did not exist in all Americans of course; even at the start there were exceptions; Thomas Jefferson, whose writings almost defined this as the critical danger for America which he hoped could be quickly eradicated with education and enlightenment.

America's wealth, power and now its world leadership, had helped reduce the complex considerably. Importantly, with the general euphoria and optimism, (unlike the gloom and depression of the past) the leaping standard of living could have allowed for honest, even painful but necessary reassessment.

There was another twist to the problem of the complex in America which many Americans seemed loth to really deal with historically; it was a country that comprised mainly of Europe's poor and what were once called the proletariat. The very concept of equality, ingrained in the American Experiment, would be said to have rejected both the evils and the hangups with regard to those feudal hierarchies, but in fact it never had. There had been clear evidence, as we have seen through this review, from Hamilton to the Monopolists to the Hearsts to the Vanderbuilts to the Luces and scores in between to show that there was secret yearning to somehow change the unchangeable, to hate class distinctions when one was poor, to claim belief in equality for all, and then — once rich, to allow those secret yearnings to take over, to seek with an extravagant display of outward manifestations of wealth not equality, but upper class status, ignorant in that pursuit of the critical fact that *true nobility is not — and never has been — merely the possession of great wealth but of culture, character and inner refinement, those subtle indefinable qualities within, the qualities that true religion at its core seeks to distill, and which past feudalistic societies had vaguely — and of course erroneously — claimed*. Nature of course has a way of making the unnatural unsatisfactory, and so such attempts at seeking upper class status caused voids, traumas and no satisfaction within; ergo, the lust for more money and power *ad infinitum*. The "New Conservatives", who should be more correctly labelled "Opportunistic Conservatives" (or "Op-Cons") were to emerge from this segment of Americans.

The American masses were ready to deal with this disease in the post World War 2 era. The records of the era and the writings of the more responsible thinkers and sociologists of the time, clearly show that the American masses were now even ready to begin the process of learning to overcome their own shortcomings. Applied Psychology was very much an American phenomenon. With the booming economy and improved standard of living, optimism was in the air. Hitherto, the critical need for economic survival had been paramount. Now the public was clearly ready to face minor traumas that would surface in dealing with the shortcomings that had caused the national inferiority complex to begin with. And, miraculously, there was now the tremendous tool to make it all happen quickly and more effectively than ever before: the new medium of Television. The widening of the horizons, culture and refinement could reach the masses and complete the process of the American Revolution. Not pseudo culture, which had become the vehicle for status seeking, but that subtle but critical, process whereby horizons widen, truth, justice and development of the Inner Self take on a new and glorious meaning; and money and what it buys become only a means to an end, not life itself. Only with a very powerful medium of communication like TV could the tide have been turned, however, because already intensely commercial media — radio, newspapers, magazines and movies — had fiercely promoted the delights of all that their advertisers sold as the ultimate gratification of a full life.



There were adverse conditions. There was the Cold War against the Communists, filled with even greater paranoia and hysteria under Congressman Richard Nixon. In its healthy form, Democracy had really nothing to fear from communism. Communism, after all, was based on even more materialistic values than Democracy — it required the surrender of all the nobler aspects of human life in return for material security.

Only where Democracy had been made corrupt and exploitative — and in some ways a Plutocracy, as the U.S. had been made in the twentieth century — did it have to be terrified. And yet clearly, the proper and enduring solution lay in the irradiation of those evils, rather than paranoia and propaganda.

And then there was the envy of Europe for American economic prosperity, which caused its own excessive reactions in America. Historically, Europeans had looked down upon Americans, but in the War years and thereafter, there was an abundance of Americans in Europe, and Europeans ridiculed their speech, their cameras, panama hats, loud ties, shirts and all aspects of nouveaux riches mannerisms, especially those of the American package tourist. Europe's destroyed economies gratefully accepted American massive aid, as had the bar girls American candy and nylons, but concurrently there was the hurt pride of a proud people, and the green-eyed monster in many.

An American, David Reisman was to write (in *Faces In The Crowd*) that "In England and Europe generally, a person is constantly confronted with aristocratic standards and behavior to which to aspire or against which to hold firm, the American middle class (sic) is more ambiguously challenged by lifestyles and taste-ingredients developed by its own experimental and traditional values." It is true that such propinquity had helped, and helped even more in the post-War era, the lower and middle classes of Europe, now emerging to power in socialistic democracies across Europe. On the other hand, attempts "to ape the rotten as well as the sound parts" of Europe as Jefferson phrased it, had been historically disastrous and ludicrous in America. Insofar as the influence of European elite on the American masses was concerned, it must be remembered that most Americans of European descent were from the submerged segments or from rural Europe, with at best a vague and often inaccurate idea of such matters. Exposure to Europe during the World Wars had necessarily been limited especially with class distinctions still prevalent to some degree.

It is significant, however, that where American "experimental and traditional values" were developed without destructive influences, they were even *more solid* and *enduring*; an *improvement* over any European value they may have been based upon. An essential part of the American Experiment had been to learn the best from the Old World and vigilantly avoid (or at least try to avoid) its mistakes. For the Americans who had remained steadfast to these original principles — true American Conservatives in fact, not the Opportunistic Conservatives that were slowly to rule America — in various aspects of life, progressive ideas and attitudes that made them truly superior to Old World contemporaries. There was every reason to admire the principles and achievements of this "Other America" soon to be submerged and only to surface occasionally in future years. Their models and inspiration were American models, from Jefferson to Thoreau to Whitman to Lincoln to Wilson. Traditional values — despite thundering media cliches to the contrary — had *never* been built around these great men, nor their ideas been properly distilled for mass consumption. All such true heroes had faced great, even overpowering opposition in their own lives

and in subsequent years. Often their detractors held the center stage far more in America than they did, and so traditional values and philosophies, as expounded by these genuine American elite had never been institutionalized. Vacuous and tokenistic praise become cliches and serve to detract. There had been an over abundance of these cliches in commercial media and it was to increase a thousand fold from now on. But "patriotism" as Dr. Johnson once said, "is the last refuge of the scoundrel" and the exploiters, in creating an aura of divinity around many deserving American heroes were to create tokenistic worship of the person of these men, causing, in effect, that adulation to *compensate* for lack of understanding and adherence to what they taught.

This then was the milieu in the post World War II era, when Television became a national medium. There was euphoria, sudden world leadership, the Cold War, a leap from the Depression; and there were vulnerabilities, not the least of which was the deep-seated national inferiority complex and the Op-Con influence of the Harry Luces and the Cold Warriors. Critical issues hung in the balance for American future. Yet the manner in which the decision to let television become commercial was made, with what can only be called irresponsible chicanery.

(v)

The Radio Act of 1927 had provided minimal controls on the radio networks. A Communications Act had been rushed through in 1934, without even a quorum by Congress. "Whereas most other Western nations created special commissions to study the uses and control of broadcasting, the United States passed the Act without a quorum or roll call — just as if it were voting on new street signs" writes Prof. H.J. Skornia (*Television and Society*, 1964). Before and after World War 2, attempts were made to enact more federal controls but the broadcasting Czars had great power in Congress, and TV became national with commercial monopoly. Soon after World War 2, the commercial radio networks commenced regular programs on their TV networks and television mania consumed America. Using all of the public's weaknesses — already known and profitably used in radio, movies and often in print — the commercial magnets began their onslaught to gain widest audiences and keep them hooked, enabling advertising rates to soar higher by the year.

To commercial TV, glorifying the consumers was the best way towards its primary objective — profits. And so it now commenced to drill in, around the clock, images that appealed to the Lowest Common Denominator in society. Most countries indulge in national glorification to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the need for morale-boosting. In the U.S. itself, morale-boosting during the Depression, and even the propaganda during World War 2 had valid, justifiable reasons. But in post-war America, for psychological, economic and moral well-being of the nation, careful and responsible restraints were necessary among the powerful who were truly patriotic and concerned about the future of the nation. Some self-glorification was unavoidable. After all, America's commercial achievements as a nation had been truly remarkable. But concern for public well-being should have been uppermost.

But this was not to be. The hoopla of commercial radio, yellow journalism and exploitative movies in both frequency and abandon, was now to be increasingly practiced with the lethal power of TV. Foreign countries and their people were to be distorted and ridiculed, while the common men and women of America were to be



glorified (thereby covering the widest segments of the audiences) *as they were, not as they could be*.

And, so, either directly or by innuendo, almost round the clock the following images were ingrained by TV the new medium: Americans had won World War 2 almost singlehandedly. In dramas and in comedies (and in children's cartoons), the Germans were vicious, cruel but dumb, without culture or elan; the French were drab and money-hungry and along with the dull Swedes, learnt not only about good living from Americans, but about love too; Italians (in Italy) were loud, lived in large, families usually in slums or in villages; and while there was the perennial adoration for British "class", the love-hate situation provided the British on TV as the stodgy, bowler and umbrella clad stiffnecks, with no sense of humor, who spoke funny English. They all had one thing in common — admiration and desire for everything American; those that did not, were, or turned out to be, villains.

Then there were the Asians and other backward countries. TV showed the Japanese, when not beaten in the War, as always bowing and smiling, or else making cheap imitations of American Quality. And as for the rest of the Asians and the South and Central Americans, the clock had apparently stopped for the past hundred years at least, while America was galloping from a wilderness into the World Leadership. Latin Americans were either brigands or sang and danced, mostly lazy, taking siestas whenever they could; they revolted incessantly and threw off one government for another in their banana Republics. They lived in unhygienic conditions ("never drink the water or you get Montazooma's Revenge"), and spoke funny English. American English was never laughable, except when spoken by an immigrant.

In colonial days, it was almost mandatory for the British to project all acquired countries as totally barbaric, which justified British suzerainty. By the 1950s, colonialism was dead or dying, but American media found that it pleased and gave a feeling of superiority to American audiences to ridicule the heathen East; besides it also fostered a "cousinly link" with Europeans.

In the real world, America's moral foundations and principles made the nation genuinely concerned for less fortunate humanity. It was what won the hearts of Asians in the post-War world when Asians were increasingly suspicious of European intentions. But commercial media imagery was to change American views steadily about Asia and irritate the Asians. The seeds of this image-making had been sown by the more exploitative movies, with proven box office profits, by *Time* and *Life*, and commercial TV began where the movies left off. And so, to the American millions, Asians and their countries were strange and weird places, overflowing with starving peasants in hutments, cheek by jowl with lions, tigers, elephants and camels, getting to lie on beds of nails as a special treat; they were ruled by sheiks and maharajahs (presumably interchangeable in dress and behavior), licentious, corrupt, crooked, with harems of concubines to which they were constantly trying to add American beauties, preferably by kidnapping; the townships had hundreds of strangely garbed natives to every square mile (newsreels also never failed to zoom in on anyone who might fit the Hollywood set stereotype), all milling around in bazaars and cashbahs at all hours, stealing from rich Americans when they could, screaming loudly in a pandemonium of donkeys, bullock carts, hawkers and filth.

The resentment of Europeans, and especially Asians or Latin Americans who saw some of these depictions never registered on the American public; America was a one-language country and geographic isolation ensured that even the weak protests



were never heard. The governments of the developing countries (even those not corrupt) never raised serious objections — the image of dire poverty of millions was *not* untrue and if it was highly exaggerated and a single-dimensional image, it helped, rather than hindered, foreign aid from America, at that stage seen by most of these countries as genuine largesse with no serious strings attached. Over the years, however, this ridicule was to reinforce the deep-seated inferiority complex in the developing countries with a typical consequence of such a complex: even as Americans were, when rich, attempting to imitate the outward manifestations of the European upper class, urban Asians and Latin American young aped every American fad and trend, and claimed superiority to their neighboring countries. It was to have dire consequences for these countries over the years. And for American foreign policy, as we shall see.

Aside from its depiction of foreign countries, commercial TV had other "success" formulae. Dozens of cowboy series, the hero tall in the saddle, dressed in the drip-dry of the 1950s through the magic of TV, shooting from the hip at other cowboys and bad men, but most often at the American Indians who never seemed to want to live in peace. The World War 2 series, glorifying the military, soon to be overtaken in popularity by the spy series (after Ian Fleming's James Bond made it big in the Cold War milieu); there were a rash of soap operas, already established as great money makers on radio; there were series showing the utter purity and invincibility of the FBI, the police and the new CIA; highly dedicated and brilliant doctors were found a popular subject (the American Medical Association already had a lot of power) and Doctor series were born.

And there, underlying all the programming, perhaps the most destructive aspect of all — to be an intellectual or even well-educated was suspect. Intelligence was pretentious; cunning was smart. The heroes and heroines were almost always of average intelligence, "the gal or guy next door" — they could be proud of their mediocrity, and always excessively proud of being Americans ("call me a fanatic or old fashioned"), and they could indulge in any form of cunning or devilry, yet the plot would ensure the audience were always in their corner. The highly cultured, on the other hand, were always snobbish in the most obnoxious way, and usually villains. To be fond of the fine arts, poetry, Shakespeare, classical music, was to be physically unattractive (fat glasses at least), dull, a target of jokes, effeminate, snooty and obnoxious. The most respectable of all occupations was a job with a large corporation — large corporations were constantly promoted as the very essence of Americanism.

By 1954, 56% of American homes owned TV sets and there was 414 commercial TV stations around the country. By 1960 nearly 90% homes had TV and watched an average of 6 hours a day and there were over 600 stations, many with round-the-clock programming. From the start, good business practice required that weekly instalments of popular shows be instituted; it ensured audience interest and made writing and production easier. Yet the sheer volume required masses of writers, directors, actors, all performing and churning out material in volume. There were some quality shows, especially comedies during the live TV days (before video tape) and some good drama and music specials, but these were the very few exceptions.

Music trends had moved with everything on mass media into an era of extreme mediocrity. The networks had very deep interests in the music business — owning music component manufacturing, record companies and interests in movie-making studios. Mass audiences and mass production and sales made it necessary to lower the standards of musical quality — that way more performers and writers could be

dressed up and popularized. With and without the aid of radio and TV, America's music tastes were shifting. The Big Band music of the Thirties and the Forties had at least the continuity of good quality music as its basics; certainly the quality of three and four-piece jazz and swing groups (like the extremely talented Benny Goodman/Teddy Wilson/Lionel Hampton/Gene Krupa quartet) had a select following. The hard bop of Miles Davis and the cool jazz of Dave Brubeck had overtaken this by the Fifties, among the select, while big band dancing had given way to jitterbug to the boogie woogie for the mass audience. But now, "country" and sophomoric pop was made the trend and with sophomoric lyrics set to repetitive, sloppy tunes. That created new markets even among people who had no musical ear, so the business was on its way to become a billion dollar goldmine (it was to reach \$6,000,000,000 within a few years; today of course the record industry alone grosses that). Market volume increased in direct proportion to the increase in promotion gimmicks and the lowering of musical talent. Jazz musicians were soon to find themselves in oblivion and poverty, while others submitted and prostituted themselves to current pop. Rock'n Roll, especially after the talented Elvis Presley appeared on the scene, performed perhaps a benign effect on the music scene even though Showbiz gimmicks and music were from now on inextricably wedded.

The movies were still the special vehicle to set music trends, but what appeared successful was quickly and with great penetration, reinforced on commercial TV. The incestuous relationship between TV and Movieland also helped greatly in bombarding the nation with political and social trends from blatant or subtle ethnic propaganda (depending on the circumstances) to social trends. In the previous era, the American social elite spoke with a peculiar British accent, and lived in a social whirl with British aristocracy or in an American adaptation of it. Now the trend was changing. Socialites still spoke with considerable snobbery, but it was increasingly an American accent. The Garment District ownership power of visual media had by now commenced to increase the social importance of the Big Retailer. Department store owners were now part of the social top echelon. In 1948, one such offering, *The Miracle of 34 Street* made it really big, because it was very well produced. It also combined various powerful appeals important to retailers — in addition to promoting Macy and Gimbles Department Stores, by name, it forcefully and emotionally emphasised in effect that Christmas was Santa Clause and the giving of gifts the most critical aspect of it. This movie was to have more screenings every year, over the years, on commercial television than any other in history. With the same primary objectives, TV was also to establish over the years especially in young minds at Christmas time that the villain to be associated with Jesus birth is Scrooge, not Herod.

Generally, the movies tended to be less distortive and contemptuous of foreign countries than TV was, because the movie market was usually more international than TV. The rewriting of history was yet another important trend that movieland set, which TV followed more blatantly and, of course, with a lot more frequency. School text books were now also Big Business and two of the TV networks were already associated with publishing (CBS network was to be one of the leading conglomerates in text books and other school material). With college curricula now very much under the patronage of Big Business as well, its control on education was almost complete. Such rewriting was not restricted to sugar coating, but to rewriting historical events almost beyond recognition, or even of making demigods of American historical figures, complete with impeccable cloths, gracious living and ponderous speech.

It included the very profitable practice of making and remaking folk heroes and



heroines out of notorious criminals — including Wild West murderers. With the quantity of cowboy movie now being churned out, coupled with the dozens of cowboy shows on TV every week, the supply of fictional cowboys was presumably drying up (in fact the cowboy had been the menial who transported cattle, usually by railroad); rewriting the stories about Western hoodlums offered great new potential for future plots. And so, more than ever before, Jesse James, the Dalton Brothers, Wyatt Earp, Billy The Kid, Diamond Jim, Diamond Li'l, Blaze Star were portrayed as lovable unfortunates, or lovable rascals. The prostitutes of the Wild West were never prostitutes, only singers and dancers. A typical example was *Calamity Jane*, a 1952 movie starring Doris Day in the role of the murderess/outlaw, (Doris Day was by now America's virgin sweetheart and the girl next door). In this movie, Calamity Jane is only tough because she has a warm heart, she only shoots to kill if you were murderous Indians on the attack; she even discards her manly cloths, wears frills, evening gowns at formal balls in the thick of the Wild West (the men wear correct formal cloths); she double-dates with Wild Bill Hickok (no hanky panky of course), and everyone loves her.

Less than half the teachers in American schools had college degrees in the 1940s, but it was soon to change. With the help of the GI Bill, college enrollment had grown to the point where there were a little over 2,000,000 students in 1950 and 3,000,000 by 1960. Youth was as always critically important as consumer and for promoting products and more and more went to college. Youth values now projected by the movies were different from those of the Henry Aldrich and Andy Hardy movies of just a few years earlier or even the *Bowery Boys*, the lower class kids who heroically changed others to their ways and values. The accent now was somewhat more on campus movies. True love was important — you sang about it a lot. Often a girl decided who she loved by the way her ears wiggled or toes curled when kissed. Sometimes when she was unsure — as Jane Powell was in *The Girl Most Likely* — on which of three guys she truly loved, she got kissed by each — and presto! she knew; high schools consisted chiefly of high school proms and suburban home antics; campus movies showed colleges where you went mainly to sing, dance, root madly for your teams, usually at football, and you could practise every form of chicanery if you were established as the hero or heroine (girls used sex every which way, but did not "go all the way").

A Ronald Reagan movie *She's Working Her Way Through College* (1952) typified dozens of others. In this, a burlesque stripper has saved money to get an education. She joins the college to major in Show Business. The Professor of Show Business (Reagan) teaches by putting on different hats and clowning in class. The annual school play, it is decided, should be a song and dance show, not Shakespeare. The only one who wanted Shakespeare was the bad snooty girl in the class anyway. There is a lot of dancing and singing through the movie, and football, of course; then the stripper is expelled, reinstated through the Professor's efforts ("Education" Reagan says to thunderous applause in the movie "is the unalienable right of all Americans"). The finale of the school's show — and the movie — is significant. It is a song and dance, the lyrics saying that knowledge and education are not all that lead to success — famous women have been big successes *without* the bother of all that learning, such as Cleopatra, Dubarry etc.

Commercial TV sold its series to advertisers and the audiences were captive. Movies had to draw audiences to theaters at home and abroad. But there was another difference, a more fundamental, more critical difference in terms of the power of



persuasion. Millions upon millions of Americans watched TV every day for all their leisure hours and the electronic medium, while also projected on a screen, consisted of pictures that derived from a single beam, unlike the movies which consisted of frames. No one in the U.S. really gave it much thought then, and few among the public have since, but the hypnotic effect of television for this and other reasons was tremendous — just how much could never be ascertained because no one published reports in media. In Europe and through the U.N., studies were undertaken during the 1950s especially to consider the impact of a visual medium (Movies or TV) on children. From the 1950s through the later decades such studies continued — by such as Mary Field and J.P. Mayer in England, Erich Washem and others in Germany, Enricho Fulchignoni and colleagues in Italy, Henri Stork in Belgium, at the Children's Neuro-Psychiatric Center in Paris; in each of the Scandinavian countries, in Spain, Portugal, New Zealand, India, Australia. Commenting on a late 1950s study in Denmark, the New Zealand specialist Gordon Mirians (in UNESCO *Courier*) said, "Contrary to common belief, many cartoons and Tarzanlike films frighten very young children; some cried and tried to leave the cinema, others had nausea, and parents later reported cases of bedwetting and nightmares, yet the same children said they thought the films were funny. They first refused to admit they were scared". It was more and more apparent that visual media had great potential as a teaching instrument, but that it needed to be used with care and responsibility.

Very few studies concentrated on the impact and influence of visual media on adults, presumably because when adults claimed not to be influenced they — unlike children — should be believed. Even fewer concentrated as yet on the peculiarly unique and hypnotizing qualities of television, the electronic medium. Advertisers and TV networks in the U.S. were, of course, already having many studies conducted into how and why programs were liked or disliked, and how well TV advertising influenced consumers. Business interests were served by ensuring that programming and advertising influenced the public as effectively as possible. And while the research tools used were as yet quite crude, they were directionally generally reliable. TV worked wonders in influencing the consumer attitudes; that was obvious. Just how it performed the miracles that it did for advertised products was, in essence, not of interest to marketing executives.

What in fact were the effects on the public watching a small screen in a darkened room? Did some or all viewers unconsciously store what they saw on the electronic screen as experience in almost the same way as real-life situations? After all, unlike the movies for which one went to a theater planning to fantasize, TV was in the home and watching it was interspersed with regular home activities. Certainly the enormous involvement reported from the start, especially reported in deep viewer reactions to deaths, weddings or separations of their favorites on the screen, was at least significant. Individual case studies were available in the future where those who, despite having been born and raised in a foreign country, found themselves, after a few years of TV viewing, refusing to believe their own real-life experiences when these seemed very different from TV's image-making of that country. How impressionable were adults even to radio? There was in the U.S. itself on Oct 30, 1938 that famous case of Orson Well's radio adaptation of H.G. Well's *War of the Worlds*, which audiences had taken as fact, and many millions of Americans had rushed out of their homes in stark panic. And that had only been radio. In the 1950's, subliminal advertising had been experimented with in films. This was a technique of introducing advertising messages via individual frames, interspersed into a feature film, which the audience watching

could not "see" but which registered on the subconscious mind (e.g. a message superimposed to instruct viewers to "Buy" a certain product). It worked, and by the late 1950's, there was great fear of its Mind Control possibilities; just about every country had legislated against its use. In the U.S. too, legislation had been widely discussed and passed but some authorities questioned the wording — they felt it did not really categorically ban subliminal advertising in every form. In later years there was evidence that subliminal suggestions were being used against shoplifting but not for selling. Such techniques are always hard to prove. The electronic medium offered even more powerful potential, such as the use of "burn". Both the FBI and the CIA were, it was later known, to conduct their own experiments with the Mind Control technique in their wider objectives, of developing effective Mind Control devices over suspects.

Television was the most powerful medium yet invented. It had great potential, far greater even than the movies for constructive use "in making the common man uncommon". But it was handed over to commercial interests. In an article in *New York Herald Tribune*, October 27, 1959, columnist Walter Lipmann was to give his opinion: "There is no competition in television except among competitors (i.e. TV entrepreneurs) trying to sell the attention of their audiences for profit. As a result, while television is supposed to be free, it has, in fact, become the creature, the servant, and indeed the prostitute of merchandising."

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For the American public, there was the understandable elation, even the intoxication of sudden prosperity after all the hardship of the past. Roosevelt's reforms had made it possible for the employed to have a better deal by law, salaries were better than ever before. The average household income by 1950 was \$3,319, almost twice what it had been in 1930, and it was to become \$5,620 by 1960. Inflation ate up much of this increase, yet conditions were never better for the American worker. Education facilities were never better in many fields — especially with the many highly talented new immigrants from Europe in most of the more prominent universities, even though the increasing control of Big Business in some educational departments ("catch 'em young and mould 'em") was at best a kind of mental conditioning to corporate values. Most importantly, optimism was in the air. Goaded by TV, on-the-job and school training and by an understandable yearning to improve their own status, the American masses were soon conditioned to mortgage their future to raise their living standards now. "Keeping up with the Joneses" it was called, and the process required not only heavy mortgaging of the future, but moonlighting on a second job, often for both husband and wife, and fiercely tied purse strings, making "free" TV the only source of entertainment. In exchange, Americans sought social status in the most ludicrous ways — with motives clearly un-American, but which TV and other media heavily promoted as the American Dream.

Marketeers provided the bait. With the right illusions projected daily by the electronic medium, month after month, year after year, money was no longer a means to an end, but the one and only end. Money could buy the right image, of culture and respectability. Money and what it could buy, said the marketeers, was the American Dream. All that TV sold was essential for that purpose. If one did not have the money, the optimistic future could be borrowed from. For marketeers, of course,



"planned obsolescence" would ensure that the bought items would have to be bought again soon.

It was not long before the more bizarre excesses in American nouveaux riches values were being written about around the world, sometimes tongue-in-cheek, often gleefully or even with mild contempt, to provide at least on occasions, balm to envious foreign societies hungrily watching the American economic boom.

At least a few thinkers in America itself were concerned, despite the general euphoria. Commercial TV and its marketeers frightened them. The hysterical communist witch-hunt frightened many. And a leading sociologist commented in more detail than others on the social tendencies and warned against the dangerous trends. In his book *The Status Seekers* (McKay, 1959), Mr. Vance Packard is unerringly on target with his concerns for the strange values that were sweeping the country. He presents innumerable examples to illustrate his concerns. A few of these examples may help illustrate the point.

Suburban homes were becoming an instant status symbol and ads reflected the yearnings "One [advertisement] of the housing developers in Manetto Hills, Long Island" writes Mr. Packard "exclaimed 'C'est magnifique! Une maison Ranch tres originale avec 8 rooms, 2½ baths... 2 Cadillac garage... No cash for veterans'". A builder in Bel Air, Florida, unveiled his \$42,000 'chateau' by proclaiming his prototype "une autre maison contemporaine de Florida". Tiny parcels of land became "huge ⅓ acre Estate sites". By 1950, there was 50% more home ownership (with heavy mortgages of course), than in 1940 and growing by the month. Status symbols made great sales persuaders, marketing gimmicks, and for television and other media a simple yet effective form of drawing and holding large segments of the public, eager to learn from the programming and advertising where they should live, what they should wear, eat, own, what views to have, what jokes to laugh at. It was no longer necessary, as habits were formed over the years, *to think as individuals*, or even to use the imagination — as had been necessary with radio — in order to live in the World of Illusion and away from reality. And marketeers were using consumer research more and more to determine consumer weaknesses. As status seeking became critical, marketeers found that people lied or exaggerated when asked questions in standard research. Motivation Research, therefore, increased in importance, as it did not rely on what respondents claimed.

Let's return to Mr. Packard for some other examples. Homes had to have "dens" or "studies" even if (as Mr. Packard quotes home-marketing expert John Mills) "people shove a television set into it and sit around it at night in semi-darkness". In a *Chicago Tribune* study, it was found that if a suburbanite aspired to move into the "lower-upper class" he now bought antiques, "symbols of social position bought with new money". And the practice of buying old portraits to claim them as those of ancestors was now quite frequent. Mr Packard says: "Mr. Doan (radio personality) related that one night he and his wife were watching Edward R. Murrow's television program 'Person-to-Person' when Mr. Murrow was 'visiting' the New York apartment of a theatrical celebrity. The camera came to rest on a pair of eighteenth century portraits. The Doans gasped in excitement. The portraits had a few years before hung in their own living room until they had found a buyer. The theatrical celebrity [on TV] modestly explained to Mr. Murrow 'Ed, those aren't my folks ... they're my wife's ancestors'".

With the inevitability of a Greek tragedy, the down-to-earth, warm-hearted, honest, confident American was being remolded. The confidence remained, was



even reinforced with convictions borne of hypnosis. Television crystalized for Americans, not only the belief that they were best as they were, but that they were what TV told them they were. The world of illusion was taking over from reality. In geographical isolation, virtually free from foreign static, the new American Dream — gingerly fostered since the turn of the century — was being firmly entrenched, institutionalized, hurling away the original American Dream and its values. In the new era of the somnambulists, far more than in the past, money bought power and illusions and that was all that mattered.

Across America, as the trend of upward mobility continued, as masses moved up to the next income group, uncertain about how to behave in their new middle class status, TV gave them their new values. People saw in TV a much better reflection of themselves than their own daily lives. TV generated styles, view points, speech, humor, fashion and beliefs. TV became the great leveller. Families around the country, from farms in Michigan to ranches in Texas, blue collar workers in Manhattan to suburbanties in California, were beginning to talk, act, like, dislike, dress more like each other than they had ever before, far more than under the influence only of the movies. Group behavior patterns were more firmly entrenched than ever. And while the outward person began to act, talk and dress, projecting, increasingly, the visual media prototypes of their choice, the inner self was forgotten. The inner self remained and became more confused, uncertain, the easy prey of every marketing and political opportunist with a sly enough approach.

A Witchita, Kansas development had \$35,000 homes with false holes near the gables, writes Mr Packard, "because French aristocrats used to have these holes in their homes as roosts for hunting birds". And he related the predicament of a Midwestern millionaire who moved to the North Shore area of Boston, built an Italian villa for a home and found himself so thoroughly ostracised by neighbors that he had to tear it down and build an 'Early American'. "The hostilities ceased" says Mr Packard "and his family is [now] well accepted". Early American style in homes and furniture carried a special status, presumably implying "old family" associations in one form or another.

Cars, country clubs and homes became, with the help of marketeers and commercial TV, instant status symbols of course. A typical TV commercial said, "Boy, you must be rich to own a car as big as this", and a slogan for Ford Edsel was "They'll know you have arrived when you drive up in an Edsel". To quote Mr. Packard again "At the John P. Mawuand's 'Happy Knoll' country club a committeeman seeking to recruit a new member boasted that 'Happy Knoll' has eight members who own Cadillacs, while the rival club only had two members with Cadillacs; the newest three years old."

Ethnic and vocational prejudices prevailed even though the dignity of labor — for the engineer or plumber — was glorified in the American tradition. These prejudices were to create their own extreme backlash in time. The blue-collar workers, fiercely learning to share in the suburban comforts, status and luxuries that TV projected to them at all times, were to become so powerfully motivated and organised through unions that the average blue-collar worker was soon earning more than the college professor and always more than the high school teacher.

The blacks were, of course, out of the "neighborhoods" race. The only major status symbols available to them were cars and the purchase of the more expensive name brands in consumer goods. It was generally believed that there were soon more Cadillacs per block in Harlem than in any other part of New York. It was this

importance of the black community as purchasers of 'status' consumer goods, that was in the 1960's to play such a major role in the formulation of 'liberal' policy by TV and other major media and some national consumer goods corporations.

"Marketeers, then, are striving to promote upward mobility — at least at the consumer level — for solid business reasons. Should this be considered a healthy or an unhealthy factor? One hesitates to draw any decisive conclusions; but in either case the conclusions are depressing" said the astute Mr. Vance Packard. In fact, Big Business never had it so good, not even in the fifty years of wild freedoms it had enjoyed after the Civil War. Laws of restraint had come to be established by Teddy Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt. Even though intervening Presidents in the 1920s had sought to reduce or even repeal some of these statutes, and an unfriendly Taft Supreme Court had sought to thwart many of Franklin Roosevelt's reforms, a good part of the controls remained. The implementation of these restrictions, however, remained largely in the attitudes of the incumbent administrations in Washington, and the eight years of the Eisenhower-Nixon regime was very friendly to Big Business. But even more important, the times provided the best opportunities. The medium of TV, in commercial hands was for Big Business, the most powerful arsenal yet devised. It could use the inherent power of the medium and the expertise derived from War-time propaganda for the promotion of Corporate Capitalism, making it synonymous with American democracy, as newspapers and radio, no matter how friendly, had never been able to achieve. Labor unrest of previous eras, since the late 19th century, had been firmly punished and suppressed. Steelworkers, mineworkers, textile workers had been put down with beatings and shootings by "goons", "scabs", armed guards, and Federal troops. At the time of the Haymarket labor uprising, shooting and hanging had achieved results, but public opinion had never been won over despite all the attempts of friendly newspapers to insist that the instigators were anarchists. The Red Scare of the 1920s had been far more successful, because there was an element of truth behind it — the newly formed Russian Communist State had spread its influence on American labor, at least to a degree, even though the Americans influenced by it were the beleaguered segments of labor who saw no redress in the U.S. system which they were told was Democracy of the purest type.

Now, in the thrilling era of TV, public opinion could be truly made pro Big Business. It is unlikely that the vast majority of Big Business leadership actually precipitated conditions to suit their commercial needs. It is far more likely that they saw the opportunity and as astute businessmen, they seized it. For export, there came to be formed a package deal in foreign affairs, a Cartel, comprising of the Movie/TV industry, other large conglomerates, CIA and the military. The CIA, formed in 1947, was already a vast international conglomerate by the mid 1950s, having, in addition to its army of covert operatives, "cover" businesses which were themselves large corporations. The Cold War had enabled the military to grow by leaps and bounds to the point where the U.S. spent in real terms most of its national budget on the military related issues, causing the National Debt to grow to astronomic levels by 1956. Like its inhabitants, the U.S. Government was borrowing from the future, confident that the Midas Touch would never cease. The Foreign Package varied, but ideally, it consisted of aid in exchange for U.S. Corporations operations in the aided country, military bases and relative freedom — depending on the country — for CIA to operate. The setting up of commercial TV enabled not only American programming to be exported, but the American marketing system itself, which the overseas



of U.S. corporations could use with great expertise and profit. The local conditions created thereby would, coupled with CIA and military activities, create a capitalistic society and a deep hate for communism. It all came under the umbrella of what was called the Eisenhower Doctrine. At the Federal level it was no doubt seen as an effective counter-attack on communism, which would not harm the foreign country, but might in fact help it to prosper as America had prospered.

In others, notably Western European countries, the efforts to create commercial TV stations were frequently resisted, even though U.S. experts set up local systems and U.S. programming greatly influenced local fare. In some, such as Britain, there was strong resistance, but eventually it was worn thin and capitulated, at least to the extent of setting up commercial TV as powerful as non-commercial. As American style commercial TV slowly molded the British public, British was also to import, almost simultaneously, what was perhaps an even worse blow to its nobility already degraded and almost extinct — New Conservatism, the Big Business form of Conservatism, seemingly of the same bent as original Conservatism, but of a very different hue which grew in power by the year. The Conservative Government of this hue had come to power in 1951. The introduction of commercial TV into Britain would slowly mold British public opinion to accept New Conservatism as the contemporary value system.

(vii)

In England, Lord John Reith of the BBC Radio opposed "head counts" and the use of radio solely for light entertainment. He was against the policy to pursue "the obvious popular lines... curry favor". But it did come in 1939, after Reith had left BBC. Some years later, in 1949, he told the Beveridge Committee on Broadcasting "Listener's Research is subversive... it causes producers to look to itself [numbers] for the criteria of success".

However, after World War 2, all American wishes had to be respectfully treated. American market research methods were soon used and American radio programs were already being aired (though "de-loused", as British critics said, of commercials). By 1949, conversion was so complete that the American showbiz magazine, *Variety* ran the headline "BBC Now a Yankee Baby In Carbon Copy of U.S. Programming".

In 1951, the Beveridge Committee on Broadcasting argued that if people of any country want broadcasting for its own sake, they must be prepared to pay for it.

In May 1952, however, the new Conservative Government's White Paper vaguely announced that "in the field of television provision would be made to permit some element of competition". "It was to herald", says Mr. Hopkins (*The Numbers Game*) "one of the most passionate and crucial public debates in Britain's postwar history... Almost all the Conservative Party's old leadership was instinctively against the idea of advertising-financed television in Britain... Lord Halifax... Leader of the House of Lords, declared it 'profoundly wrong'; Lord Brand said 'it... spreads the idea that everything is for sale'; Lord Radcliffe... warned that the 'level of the culture of the country' was being 'put in hazard'; Lord Hailsham compared the proposal ... to setting up of a Golden Calf".

Labor Party leader Herbert Morrison declared that "the projected development is totally against British temperament, the British Way of Life, the best — even reasonably good — British traditions". And Mr. Attlee pledged to repeal any such act



on Labor's return to power. However, the force for commercial TV came from powerful businessmen like Frederick Marquis, an economist, schooled in Manchester and very enthused with American retailing methods; he had worked himself up at Lewis's departmental store in Liverpool, became its Chairman and Managing Director, and was awarded a peerage which got him into the House of Lords. As Lord Woolton, he entered politics and became a Cabinet Minister. "He put the Conservative Party into large-scale slick, advertising campaigns. He was himself, the prototype of the new men brought into the part ... they came from the professions and business, journalism, advertising and public relations" writes Mr. Hopkins. Professor W.W. Wilson, (in *Pressure Group: The Campaign for Commercial Television*) goes further. "Britain was given commercial television against the advice of almost all the nominal leaders of society in education, religion and culture, as well as significant sections of the business community. At no time was the British electorate, or even the rank and file Conservative voter, given an opportunity of passing on the merits of the case. Lord Hailsham may have been extreme in characterizing the submission of the television bill to Parliament as a 'shoddy and squalid constitutional error' but many believed there was justification for his criticism of the Government for 'its deliberate concealment' in not presenting the issue for debate in the General Election". The British Conservative Government was the first of a series to be increasingly subservient to the U.S.

Lord Hailsham had in fact observed on November 25, 1953 in Parliament, that "the introduction of commercial television is to the advantage [only] of the very large agents, particularly those which are branches of big American [advertising] agencies". Less than a week after this (November 30, 1953), *Broadcasting* magazine in America concluded an editorial on Britain's eventual conversion to commercial TV with the following:

"Dear little John Bulls,  
Don't you cry  
You'll be full commercial  
Bye and bye."

Professor Wilson traces "the defeat of the [original] Conservative Party [on the commercial TV issue] to a very small group of nominally politically insignificant Conservative backbenchers... actually they were not insignificant, because they were, in effect, spokesmen for powerful economic groups — e.g. the radio-television manufacturing industries, major American and British advertising agencies, and financial institutions".

It was not just the U.S. advertising fraternity that used its muscles however, Prof. Skornia (*Television and Society*) says, "It would be a mistake to believe that only United States advertising agencies were involved. Equally involved were United States equipment manufacturers, film networks and the trade press". U.S. TV networks were of course by now — and increasingly to be in the future — involved in all of these businesses through parent or subsidiary companies in Britain.

At the time commercial TV was introduced in the U.K., Earl de la Warr, the Postmaster-General said that the British "would not respond favorably to the same vulgarities and horrors, and even tiresomeness that are apparently so popular elsewhere". However, as Mr. Hopkins puts it "By cleverly labelling their proposal 'Independent Television' the commercial lobby classically masked the issue of the ultimate, effective control, and kept the critical spotlight firmly focused on the BBC's monopoly". By 1957 "if one took the lower income groups, the flight from the BBC

appeared almost total. And it seemed clear that this was more than just a vote for or against particular programmes. It has a socio-political statement: it was a vote against 'Them', the Officers and Gentlemen, the 'Toffee-nosed', the 'Highbrows', the 'Eggheads', whom the BBC now seemed to represent when set alongside the breezy mid-Atlantic style of the TV newscasters (the BBC had only 'announcers'), the gregariousness of the London Palladium or even the mateyness of OMO or Murray Mints the too-good-to-hurry mints."

Whatever the power of one pressure group over another, the end result was achieved. Britain went commercial, but with what we may now recognise as an important and highly beneficial — if accidental — difference. BBC retained a strong non-commercial entity. This allowed a healthy competition — commercial broadcast media could not ignore quality for commercial ends altogether, and conversely BBC could not become too staid and dull. BBC, contrary to popular belief, was not owned by the British government or even by private grants from corporations, as the feeble PBS in future years was to be in the U.S. The BBC therefore retained a degree of autonomy, which enabled it to set the pace often for good quality, for the sake of quality.

It would be unwise to speculate from a distance the precise impact commercial radio and TV have had on Britain over the years. British society was drastically changed in the post-war era, anyway. The aristocracy no longer existed as a power. The impact of commercial TV selling certainly can safely be said to augment the craving for material goods substantially, and with it, increased impatience of the old lower classes and labor unrest. Also, by the late 1950s and early 1960s, powerful American influence was perceptible in everyday life. The old Conservative values may be said to have been laid to rest in this period and, from its ashes was to emerge the power of New American style Conservatism — which would grow in the years and spread to all parties which included, among other things, the implied belief that class distinctions are *not* wrong as long as the criteria for superior class definition are not family and breeding but Money, Race and National Origin. Politically, this provided a wonderful crowd-pleasing belief; from the Cockneys to the Midlands and the Isle of Man, all the English could potentially claim such class superiority. A brazen form of snobbery was from now on to become a symbol of superiority rather than "bad form" in the Made-for-TV variety of New Conservatism. It would be impossible to determine, however, just how much commercial broadcast media was to contribute to all this — because other major changes were taking place in Britain. The lower classes were emerging in dramatic social changes, the "middle class" (which as in the U.S. included everyone who claimed to be that) was from now on in power; the financially crippled nation had lost an empire that kept it prosperous and morale was low. The submerged majority, the historically poor, now emerging from oblivion, had never been part of the fruits of a prosperous empire, but had drawn great comfort from the reflected glory of its existence — a solace drilled into that majority over many decades is much the same, (though of course with comparatively miniscule strength) as the chauvinism that the U.S. commercial interests were even now bombarding at the American public. Yet, for these masses, in Britain, their newly acquired equality status was, in many ways, a pyrrhic victory: just when they were equal there was no Glory Of The Empire. To what degree, then, did these frustrations, excessing yearnings for the goodies advertised on commercial TV and increasing commercial domination contribute to the impatience and unrest of labor over future years? Or even to the youth revolt that was to have such a powerful impact on youth in the U.S. and around

the world? That can only, perhaps, be properly assessed by those who have lived and researched conditions in this period within Britain.

(viii)

Back in the U.S., TV's spectacular growth and the phenomenal success of manufacturers who advertised their products on it, quickly led to increasing services to measure audience preferences, advertising and program effectiveness, audience sizes and compositions, and more intensive studies. There was the A.C. Nielsen basic ratings, along with its other media and trade study services, but there were plenty of others, some extensions of radio and print research. There were ARB, Crossley, Hooper, Pulse, Tendrex, TVQ, Videodex and others that grew out of the huge market potential. Some maintained mobile monitoring vans which measured the signal frequencies from antennas in different neighborhoods, others concentrated on audience profile, still others attempted to eavesdrop on homes, and at least one attempted to measure the frequency of toilet use during commercial breaks.

But alongside these and other extensive consumer studies, sociological and motivation experts were already being used by the networks and major advertisers to develop techniques to reach within the consumer subconscious and elicit psychological profiles and weaknesses, better than the consumers themselves knew them. This also served another useful purpose — to get facts when consumers tended to exaggerate or even lie about issues related to status symbols.

The power to sway, mold and control the consuming public seemed limitless to Big Business, especially after these techniques were to be sharpened and become more and more sophisticated over the years. From the start, however, the great power of TV and these increasingly potent tools to know and control the consuming public, was not lost on some politicians. To Richard Milhous Nixon, this potential had been fascinating from the very start.

(ix)

Mr. Nixon was to be a kind of pioneer in the new era of politicking. Albert Lasker, the ad man of the Twenties, had introduced the Republican Party to the use of professional advertising and public relations methods — then crude yet effective — and help Harding undermine Woodrow Wilson's policies nearly thirty years ago. Now Mr. Nixon came into politics, a friend of Big Business and fascinated with advertising, marketing and public relation tools. The fact that his facial characteristics and deportment were believed to have worked against him later in his presidential debates of 1960, is ironical but does not alter the fact that he was, from the start of his political career, able to see the value of, and want to use, image-making and all the market research tools — as they developed — for political ends. The prejudice that some media journalists were to develop towards him from time to time, irked him all the more because he was so keenly aware of their image-making power.

In an evaluation of how commercial TV and advertising can be used politically on an unsuspecting public, the career and practises of Mr. Nixon become critical in the history of America from the 1950s onwards. He was Congressman, Senator, Vice-President and President but in some ways he was more than that — he came to represent the views of a large segment of America; in essence, using all the marketing



tools, he helped *create* those viewpoints and attitudes of a large part of his constituency from their youth onwards — viewpoints and attitudes that remain and will no doubt remain for a long time. Over the years he helped make Big Business into the most powerful institution in the world. He headed the extremism of the Cold War (with tactics that fellow-Republican Joe McCarthy was to carry to even greater extremes), then could claim the distinction years later of having thawed it, ignoring all that the obsessive Cold War has done to the U.S. and the world during the years between; he would initiate American involvement in Vietnam in the 1950s, then years later claim credit for ending it. He would make hypocrisy, always present in public life, into an art form. And he would make out of his own lack of charisma a *virtue*, an indication of sincerity to many Americans. And he would do all that, using to the fullest, all that he could of advertising, public relations, market research. The Image-Making Machine was not dismantled in 1974 when the originator was sent away. Other politicians have taken to use it, noting how successfully it had been used.

A highly intelligent man, with leadership qualities and a sharp analytical mind, he is reportedly religious and a loving family man; some might argue that he is a congenital liar, a schemer by nature not by environment. Perhaps that is true but we shall never really know. Certainly his ability to convince himself (even before others) that what was good for himself was good for the country, seemed to have caught up with him at the end. He seemed genuinely unable to tell right from wrong, truth from fantasy and lies — having created a world of illusion with such great expertise he was consumed by it in much the same way as Joe McCarthy was at the end. Today, *could* the real Richard Milhous Nixon stand up?

In "The Hidden Persuaders" (McKay, 1957), Mr. Vance Packard records the entry of Mr. Nixon and the Republican Party into big-time use of advertising with the employment of BBD & O, the ad agency, on a year-round basis. Mr. Packard writes: "As the decade of the fifties was beginning, a portent of things to come appeared in the *New York World-Telegram*, a normally Republican paper, in describing preparations for the 1950 Congressional Campaigns. The headline read: 'The Hucksters Take Over GOP [Republican] Campaign'". And Mr. Packard adds a little later in the book "Another California persuader of the new school of build-up artists is Murray Chotiner, Los Angeles lawyer, who groomed Richard Nixon for national stardom and managed Nixon's 1952 campaign ... Chotiner's basic technique ... [in promoting politicians] ... was to present the public with two images: The good guy (his guy) and the bad guy (the opponent). One of the topics he covered [as a lecturer to Republican politicians] was the use of ... the 'smear'; and he told about *the art of implying that the opponent has leftist leanings* ... and the technique of winning people's hearts with carefully *simulated candor*" (emphasis added). And Mr. Richard H. Rovers in *Affairs of State: The Eisenhower Years*, published in that period wrote: "Richard Nixon appears to be a politician with an advertising man's approach to his work. Politicians [to him] are products to be sold to the public, this one today, that one tomorrow, depending on the discounts and the state of the market. He [Nixon] moves from intervention (in Indo-China) to non-intervention (elsewhere) with the same ease and lack of anguish with which a copywriter might transfer his loyalties from Camels to Chesterfields".

Nixon also had a head start in the close friendship and help from H.R. Haldeman, then a J. Walter Thompson (ad agency) executive and Nixon's campaign aide. While there had been some questions raised about Nixon's fund-raising and campaign ethics when seeking elective office from California, he was soon a national

figure as Congressman and later Senator, because of his drive in the form of an evangelist against communism. It enabled him, not only to prove himself a warm patriot, but — using the Chotiner System — check-mate opponents to his hard line, by suggesting that they were “soft on communism” or even communist sympathisers, a label, however untrue, no politician wanted to risk being plastered with.

The prominence the Alger Hiss case won for Nixon, was to spiral him into the Vice-Presidency under General Eisenhower, a military man, rather obviously confused in matters other than weapons and warfare, (he had initially been unsure whether to be the Democratic or Republican candidate) but whom an adoring public in a tidal wave of war panic drove into the White House.

It was during his first campaign for Vice-President under Eisenhower that there was another scandal regarding an \$18,000 slush fund involving Mr. Nixon. Evidence was reportedly so strong that Eisenhower was on the verge of making him resign his nomination for the Vice-Presidency. With suitable help from his image merchants however, Nixon elected to face the danger head-on and went on national television in 1952 with his wife, his two daughters and his daughter Tricia's dog “Checkers” (the speech was to go down in history as the “Checkers” speech)\*. Mr. Nixon told America that he was innocent of any wrong doing, just an honest, poor patriot. He drew the audience's attention to his wife's cloth coat as proof that she did not have any mink coats that he was accused of being bribed with. He hinted darkly at plots against him, plots because he spoke out against communism and dangers to the land he loved, which made him enemies among people who did not love America or have her interests at heart. He talked of his two little daughters and presented what was presumably the conclusive proof of his innocence, his daughter's dog Checkers. He loved Checkers.

Almost instantaneously, a tear-stained nation issued its verdict. No man so American in his patriotism, in his love for his wife, his kids and their dog, could be guilty of such behavior in high office. Mr. Nixon emerged a national hero and the Checkers speech an important page in history. In knowledgeable circles it was to establish the label of “Tricky Dick” on Mr. Nixon, but that did not matter.

Politicians, marketing professionals and image merchants made careful note of the public response for future use. Families and dogs were to become an even more critical part of the “package” in many political campaigns of the future. To what degree America's sales of dog food which jumped to astronomical heights each succeeding year were helped as a direct result of this will never be known. Nor would it be possible to tell what path future history may have taken if Americans had been aware that Krushchev had not only a wife and children but a dog as well. Or that Hitler fervently loved dogs. As it was, the “Checkers” syndrome was to provide Nixon with a formula he used efficiently, often, and until Watergate, very profitably.

But while Richard Nixon successfully used the anti-communist platform to rise

\* After Nixon's “Checkers” speech, *Time* magazine said “he has made one of the most dramatically successful speeches in the history of U.S. politics”. Luce's *Life* magazine gave Nixon seven pages and forty very emotional photographs. For the 1952 elections, Luce made no bones about how he felt. Eisenhower was “strong, vigorous ... innate kindliness and modesty... charm” Nixon was “goodlooking, dark haired young man... he seemed to have everything... rarely takes a drink” On the other hand, Democratic candidate Stevenson, said *Time*, has “the standard Democratic formula... thrown on the defensive... nervous laughter... unfitted for the job... would have to face the facts of life”. “Does He Make Sense to the American People?” asked *Time* Magazine in a cover story on Stevenson, one week before the elections (*Time* magazine Oct. 27, '52).



to stardom, his fellow-Republican was to take it all to extreme and make himself a national hero as he carried the anti-Communist witch-hunt to hysteria. Unlike Nixon, Joe McCarthy was to use it injudiciously and fall as swiftly as he had risen.

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In addition to party membership, and close personal camaraderie, there were a lot of similarities between the background and makeup of Nixon and McCarthy. Both were of very poor families but fiercely ambitious, both had traumatic early years, both developed a deep hate for intellectuals, and both had a unique ability to arouse and raise to seeming virtue the baser instincts in the voting public; and both used at least questionable methods in their campaign tactics; Nixon, however, was more clever, more subtle.

In Wisconsin, McCarthy began public life as a Democrat, then quickly shifted to the Republican Party where he could make more headway. He won a remote District Judgeship and later his Senate seat by what has since been clearly shown to be brazen and false accusations against his opponents. He ran for the Senate while yet a District Judge and in the military, (which was against the law), and used such falsehoods in his Senate campaign that immediately after election, legal proceedings were instituted.

The Court, however, issued a curious ruling. While the illegality was proven, it said, "it is unlikely to be repeated", and allowed him to take the Senate seat. Senator La Follette, whom McCarthy unseated, was considered one of the most able and principled men in the Senate. Commenting later on his own defeat, and on the political conditions of the time, La Follette recalled "Anyone who spoke English with the right syntax was suspected of being foreign". Regarding the La Follette defeat, Richard Rovere (*Senator Joe McCarthy*) writes that he lost because he was too busy working at his Senate job to fight McCarthy's wild attacks. "It happens often that a Senator loses his seat primarily because of the distinction with which he has filled it". Aside from wild attacks at Senator La Follette, McCarthy fabricated a war hero career. He even claimed for himself the title of "Tail Gunner Joe" when he had never been a tail gunner in World War 2.

At a now famous breakfast in 1950, Senator McCarthy asked friends to help him pick an issue which would win him re-election in the Senate, and public recognition. The anti-Communist issue was chosen.

And so, on February 9, 1950 while addressing a group of Republican women\* in Wheeling, West Virginia, McCarthy launched his bombshell. McCarthy claimed to have a list of 205 Communists in the State Department (which he waved as he spoke). In the pandemonium that followed and over the next months, McCarthy refused to show the list to anyone, but the number of communists mentioned varied with each subsequent speech; they became 109, 91, 57 — not necessarily in that order.

News media played up each McCarthy story; his public support grew. Newspapers and TV headlined his comments more frequently than those of others; and within a short time, McCarthy was a national hero.

Reporters followed him around like bees and editors printed anything he had to

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\* Two decades later, Spiro Agnew, Nixon's VP, was to launch his attack on intellectuals, media and create "The Silent Majority" also in a speech to Republican women.



say, no matter how outlandish and wild. Soon he could — as he did — call a news conference to announce a later news conference and reporters came in droves. By now, McCarthy gave media large audiences and circulation; to most of media therefore, the fact that he could not back any of his charges with any reliable evidence was, if anything, secondary. McCarthy knew this and used it very effectively. “He was capable of going into a tantrum before the television cameras” writes Mr. Rovere “and screaming ‘Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman, point of order, point of order’ and then making a beeline for the gents’ room ... he would tear passions to tatters, saying that he could bear no longer of this farce which made him ‘sick, sick, sick, sick, way down inside’ and then stage a walkout that would take him no farther than a corner of the room outside the sweep of the television cameras, there to observe calmly and be amused by the commotion he had caused. He often [also] staged his walkouts for the newspaper headlines”.

Very soon the power he wielded was feared by all, Congressmen, Senators and Presidents. Truman feared him enough to make wild attacks on communists when threatened by a McCarthy suggestion that he was “soft on communism”.

Richard Nixon and the unAmerican Activities Committee had begun their blacklist against movie, TV and radio professionals with paranoia. Joe McCarthy’s Permanent Committee was to carry it all to extremes. When the dust began to settle, stars (significantly, usually Cowboy stars) like Gary Cooper, John Wayne, and B-movie actors like Ronald Reagan\* had all screamed disgust (at hearings usually on camera) against everything that was not Capitalist (not to be confused with Democratic) to the wild cheers of the McCarthy supporters at the hearings; some stars advocated total blacklist at least for writers, producers, directors, and stars whom the Committee might suspect in any way. Moderation was advocated by such as Humphrey Bogart and Judy Halliday. Halliday, the brilliant rising star of *Born Yesterday* and other movies with unusual social comment and quality, was to quickly fade away. Larry Parks was to be totally black-listed; other prominent stars like Edward G. Robinson and Jose Ferrar were pardoned after they made public apologies and passionately promised to never associate with intellectuals again. Some top stars were severely ostracized. John Garfield died of a heart attack after defying the House Committee for a while, Charlie Chaplin furiously packed his bags and left for Britain, his country of origin and never returned to the U.S. until 1972 to accept a special Oscar Award. Top literaries such as Arthur Miller and Dorothy Sayers were “suspended” for several years. David Cate, the British writer, in his book (*The Great Fear*), gives details of the blacklisted in all professions, and *The New York Times* later estimated that by 1954, the number of people affected in radio and TV alone was about 1,500.

“Most of the victims were never explicitly informed why they could no longer find work” Cate says “particularly bewildered were the numerous victims whose names or faces were confused with those on the list. The actor, Everette Sloan, suffered because his name resembled that of the script writer and self-professed former Communist Allen E. Sloan; when the actress Madeline Lee, a specialist in radio baby noises were backlisted, three other actresses, innocent of all political activity, faced

\* Ironically, Reagan had later to rescue a starlet named Nancy (daughter of a New Jersey car salesman) whose name had been mixed up with another suspected of Red leanings; she later became his second wife.

ruin — one because she was called Madeline Lee, one (Camilla Ashland) because she resembled Madeline Lee and one (Madeline Piece) because she was too a proven baby-gurgler. John Cogley cited the case of an actor who spent four years trying to prove that he *could not have served in the [Spanish Civil War] Abraham Lincoln Brigade*. (italics added) Idealism was apparently, immediately associated with communism.

McCarthy's own tactics were pure routine. He used the Chotiner System even more effectively than Nixon did. If anyone bothered him, or questioned his wild accusations, he immediately labelled the questioner a communist or communist sympathiser, made vague suggestions, and before anyone knew it, he or she would be in the doghouse. Senator Tydings of Maryland, questioned the sobriety and the reality of McCarthy's charges. McCarthy sent his henchmen into Maryland during re-election and the smear job they did was so effective, that Senator Tydings lost his seat. McCarthy had the backing of some churchmen, Catholic and Protestant, though many of the clergy were reluctant to support his methods of fighting atheism. But his support overall was mighty. His supporters created "search" operations such as "Aware" and "Counter Attack". Through secret and often illegal channels, details about innumerable Americans were gathered and anyone even remotely suspected of having been critical of the U.S. was thereafter on the blacklist. Major corporations, TV networks and ad agencies paid for this screening by his organisation and followed it. Books such as that of Mr. Davind Cauté in later years give voluminous details of such activities and the excesses.

To a jubilant Republican Party, McCarthy was a treasure. The Chotiner System of accusing opposition Democrats of being soft on communism when they criticized, was, as we have seen, never better implemented than by Nixon and McCarthy. Taft Jr., the Republican leader, is quoted as telling McCarthy "If one case [of suspected communist sympathies] does not work, try another". It was felt that if enough stones were thrown, at least one would hit something.

By now, President Eisenhower himself was completely dominated by McCarthy. McCarthy declassified confidential documents at will; he insisted on appointing men of his choice to top Federal positions and the President humbly agreed. He bombarded General Marshall, a World War 2 hero, (Eisenhower's former boss and friend) with contemptuous epithets and accusations until the old general retired away into private life. Eisenhower did nothing. On one occasion, Eisenhower's speech writers had prepared a speech in defence of General Marshall. Sharing the same platform with McCarthy, President Eisenhower could not summon up the nerve to use it to defend his former boss and mentor.

McCarthy was constantly under investigation for highly suspicious dealings with corporations and special interests, such as Pepsi Cola, Lustron etc.; at one point he was dubbed the Pepsi Kid. Later, a great deal of evidence of reported illegal involvement with Big Business was to be made public. But in the days of his glory, McCarthy had a simple way of dealing with all the charges of corruption against him. He called them all untrue, and when Senate committees finally came to have evidence of corruption strong enough to require him to answer, McCarthy simply refused. And no one apparently could make him do so, or institute legal action.

McCarthy's campaign against the Voice of America which he accused of being under communist influence, achieved the expulsion of 86 employees. Not satisfied with this, he sent his erstwhile assistants Cohen (who spelt it 'Cohn') and Schine on a rampage around the U.S. embassies in Europe to search out books in libraries that



may be "communistically inclined". The serious, but absurd investigations of these two were viewed by European press as a huge joke (their names suggested a vaudeville team as well; Mr. Rovere writes "British correspondents who followed them quickly began chanting "Positively, Mr. Cohn! Absolutely, Mr. Schine"). Their chase around Europe looking for subversives led to the destruction of books from the U.S. libraries which, in their opinion, were "subversive". Books objected to ranged from *The Maltese Falcon* to Mark Twain (the latter presumably because the Russian libraries also had it).

At the peak of his power, McCarthy made the fatal mistake of attacking the U.S. military — though he made it clear he was wholly for the military, only against the subversives in it. His assistant Schine had been drafted by the Army, but he wanted to be made an intelligence officer. The Army Secretary refused McCarthy's demand for an immediate change in Schine's status. And so McCarthy went after the Army, claiming it harbored subversives. It all resulted in the Army-McCarthy hearings in which McCarthy came through as not only wild, but somewhat mentally unbalanced. His fortunes began to slip. Reporters did not hang around him any more. He drank more heavily than usual. Eisenhower — apparently advised to clean his own skirts from the falling McCarthy — announced that the McCarthys were not welcome at the White House for social activities any more. The Senate — no longer terrified — was now impatient with McCarthy's mannerisms, and passed a vote of censure against him. "He was discouraged" writes Mr. Rovere "He regarded himself as betrayed. He particularly felt he was betrayed by Vice-President Nixon, whom he had always trusted". Until his power diminished, there had been very few courageous enough to oppose or even criticize him.

"In February 1954, there was exactly one man in the Senate, William Fulbright, of Arkansas, who found it possible to cast a vote against an appropriation of \$214,000 for Senator McCarthy's Permanent Committee" writes Richard Rovere (*Senator Joseph McCarthy*, Harper, 1959). There were Senator Margaret Chase Smith and Senator Wayne Morris who also raised early objections to McCarthy when no one else dared and all seemed willing to go along with him.

There were exceptions in the media too. On December 3, 1953, syndicated columnists Joseph and Stewart Alsop wrote "McCarthy is the only major politician in the country who can be labelled 'liar' without fear of libel". Thomas Griffith in *Waist-High Culture* wrote, "Over his (McCarthy's) grave should be written the simple epitaph: The Truth Wasn't In Him". Drew Pearson was one of the first to criticize McCarthy, and was physically attacked in a restaurant by McCarthy as a result. McCarthy then openly threatened sponsors of Pearson's broadcasts and successfully ended advertising sponsorships. And of course there was, as we shall see, Edward R. Murrow... But the vast majority of the media did not begin to criticize until McCarthy's decline made it safe, and a lot more who were to give many excuses later. There was, for instance, William Buckley (in later decades to be some kind of New Conservatives' answer to intellectualism) who wrote in *McCarthy and His Enemies* (coauthored with Brent Bozell), "McCarthyism ... is a movement around which men of good will and stern morality can close ranks". Buckley's brother-in-law was one of McCarthy's speech writers.

In defence of its constant headline coverage of McCarthy's accusations, *The New York Times* made the typical defence, that others in TV and print have made before and since. "*The [New York] Times* admitted that there turned out to be no truth in some of the headline accusations it printed on the basis of McCarthy's accusations"



writes Mr. Rovere "But it claimed it had no alternative. 'It is difficult if not impossible to ignore charges by Senator McCarthy just because they are usually proven wrong' said the *Times* 'The remedy lies with the reader'". Commenting on this explanation from the *Times*, Mr. Rovere says "To many people this explanation was like saying that if a restaurant serves poison food, it is up to the diner to refuse it". It was media's contention that though McCarthy's sensationalism sold a lot of papers, and dramatically increased TV news audiences, that was not a factor which caused media to print and show everything McCarthy said or suggested. The fact remains, however, that despite all the newspaper headlines and TV coverage, there was not one single case in which McCarthy or his associates actually obtained proof to convict one single subversive.

There were two men in broadcast journalism who dared and played a vital role in McCarthy's downfall. One was Edward R. Morrow, the unique and principled newsman, formerly a renowned radio journalist during World War 2, now with his own TV program. The other, his producer Fred Friendly. The Morrow-Friendly team in another series: *CBS Reports* set some remarkable milestones which none followed. In these special reports, Morrow brought exposes like *Harvest of Shame* about the horrors of migrant farm workers, *Murder and the Right to Bear Arms* (against the gun-happy freedoms), *The Business of Health*, which the American Medical Association attacked fiercely as a "Socialist plot" and so on. Before and since, Morrow had attempted to use TV as a tool for documentaries, to inform the public on vital issues, often controversial and unpopular. He could and did fight the network tycoons to achieve this. He had power. Aside from Morrow, news broadcasts on TV at the time were such as NBC's *Camel News Caravan* (sponsored by Camel cigarettes) in which anchorman John Cameron Swayze bubbled daily with statements like "Now, let's go hopscotching around the world for headlines".

Morrow took up the cudgel against McCarthy, the national hero, in a segment on his *See It Now* TV program. *The Case against Milo Radulovich AO589839* brought to the public the discharge of Lieutenant Milo Radulovich, aged 26, because the McCarthy Committee had some vague charges against his married sister and father, one of the main charges being that they read "subversive newspapers". The charges were so flimsy that with the publicity of Morrow's TV program, the charges against the Lieutenant were dropped and he was re-instated. Yet CBS network had been very reluctant to air this broadcast, and when it did agree, it refused to advertise this particular program; Morrow and Friendly decided to advertise it in *The New York Times with their own money*. The advertisement did not carry the CBS symbol and was signed by Ed Morrow and Fred Friendly. The program was received with deep gratitude by thinkers and terrified innocents. There was anger and shock, however, from many segments of the public.

And then there was the case of J. Robert Oppenheimer. Perhaps the most critical decisions made regarding American military policies of the future, and through it, the size and power of what Eisenhower himself was to criticize as "the Military-Industrial Complex", was when Truman over-ruled Oppenheimer, (and Eisenhower was to seal it), by ordering in 1953 that Oppenheimer be denied access to his own atomic research. Truman also removed him from the Atomic Energy Commission, of which Oppenheimer had earlier been Chairman.

Oppenheimer was the head of the Manhattan Project with a team of highly talented scientists who had migrated to the U.S. between the two World Wars, in charge of the development of the Atom Bomb, which the Nazis had earlier begun.

Watching the first test explosion of his Bomb, Oppenheimer had emotionally quoted from the Hindu Bhaghwat-Gita "Now I am become Death, the destroyer of the Worlds". By the time the Atom Bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Oppenheimer, like Einstein and many other leading physicists, had been extremely concerned about the devastation of atomic warfare.

Naturally, this irritated the growing "Military-Industrial Complex"; then they found their most useful weapon against Oppenheimer — a physicist who had worked under Oppenheimer, and was very ambitious. Dr. Edward Teller was also an immigrant (born of Jewish parents in Hungary, educated in Germany). Teller was not just keen on the Atom Bomb, he was obsessed with the development of the Hydrogen Bomb, a thousand times more deadly, which Oppenheimer, as his boss, just as furiously opposed. Teller's enthusiasm, "Learning To Love The Bomb" as he put it, his belief that opposition was "merely moral", overcame opposition of some concerned minds even in the military, whereas Defence contractors loved him; *Time* magazine was to put him on its cover as a great patriot. Truman even provided Teller with new Californian facilities. Oppenheimer resigned from the Atomic Research headquarters in Los Alamos, New Mexico.

But it did not end there for Oppenheimer. The McCarthy group, with Teller as their star witness, worked up a case against Oppenheimer, in a post mortem, claiming that Oppenheimer's youthful interest with socialist-communist groups had not been all that innocent, and had not ended, that in effect Oppenheimer had, because of pro-communist ideologies, sabotaged the development of The Bomb earlier. By all accounts, Teller's testimony was the most damaging. Teller carefully chose his words, with great emotion, (brilliant acting, some observers recall) to say that he had great regard for his former boss, that he was himself convinced Oppenheimer was *not* an enemy agent or anti-American only that Oppenheimer had been misguided by his beliefs.

The decision to bar Oppenheimer from all Federal nuclear programs — even from his own previous researches, and to keep the sword hanging over him of possible further actions — destroyed Oppenheimer, the scientist. The shock and the pain sent him into a decline, then both him and his wife to drink and to the destruction of their marriage. The top scientists of the time, appalled at the destruction of the man whom they had come to look upon as their leader, shunned Teller, and later (in a PBS special) spoke of him as a "monomaniac". But Teller apparently did not care. To many in the government, to industry, to media (and through it to the American public) he was the Great Patriot.\*

On January 1, 1955, Edward R. Morrow aired *A Conversation With Oppenheimer* in his *See It Now* series on CBS. From the responses to it, it was apparent that many in the audience were shaken at noting Oppenheimer's obvious sincerity, his intelligence, his pain. Some of the media denounced Morrow for the program. The Hearst newspapers were particularly scathing. They could be deadly as had happened in the case of Don Hollensack, whose *CBS Views The Press* had been aired, through Morrow's own muscle, despite opposition from CBS' bosses

\* Teller placed himself or was placed in cold storage all through the 'anti-war' period of the late Sixties and early Seventies; when the mood had given way to the current military escalation he was back on TV and print, pleading for a "limited" nuclear war which, he insisted, the U.S. would survive. He even outlined how the President could announce it.



themselves. Furious attacks had been directed as a result at Hollensack by the pro-McCarthy press, until "Hollensack, ill and harried by the ceaseless attacks, committed suicide" writes Eric Barnow (*Tube Of Plenty* Oxford, 1975). His suicide did not satisfy some of the press; Hearst columnist Jack O'Brian wrote that the suicide "does not remove from the record the peculiar history of leftist slanting of news".

Morrow, however, was not intimidated by such hostile reactions to his Oppenheimer program. On March 9, 1955, he went after the "Tail gunner" himself. Step by step, he took the audience through McCarthy's excesses. Once again CBS had refused to advertise the program, and once more Morrow and his producer, Fred Friendly, had spent their own money to place an advertisement in *The New York Times*, announcing it.

McCarthy was furious; CBS provided him free air time in rebuttal. He said in this program what he thought of Morrow "a symbol, the leader and the cleverest of the jackal pack which is always found at the throat of anyone who dares to expose individual communists and traitors". CBS found from an Elmer Roper study that 59% of the American audience believed McCarthy had successfully raised doubts about Morrow and his political affiliations. CBS moved Morrow's *See It Now* to the "cultural ghetto" of Sunday afternoon (lowest audience size) until it was put off the air in 1958. That same year, speaking his mind to TV and Radio News Directors at a function in Chicago, Morrow warned that "future historians will find recorded in black and white, and color, evidence of decadence, escapism and insulation from realities of the world we live in... if we go on as we are, then history will take its revenge."\*

In the meanwhile, despite the hostility from some quarters, Morrow's confrontation with McCarthy, coupled with McCarthy's erratic behavior at the Army-McCarthy hearings had shown the right-minded in the country that the motivating force in McCarthy, the supreme political figure in the country for some years, was not great love and dedication to the nation and democracy, but mental instability. Slowly the fears of the man and his machine were reduced; questions asked; more evidence of irrationality in McCarthy's speech and behavior, more evidence of his drunken bouts. Eisenhower discontinued social invitations; Nixon drew himself carefully to a safe distance. The Senate passed a Vote of Censor against him. He was in and out of institutions thereafter, until his death in 1957.

His accusations and those of his secret organizations led to many innocent lives

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\* In rebuttal to Morrow's views of TV's decadence those expressed at the time by Frank Stanton (who Chairman Paley had made President of CBS) are interesting: "A program in which a part of the [general] audience is interested, is by that viewpoint, in the public interest". Stanton had been a professional audience research specialist. Morrow responded to this statement "Dr. Stanton has finally revealed his ignorance both of news and of requirements of Television production". CBS's Paley and Stanton demanded an apology from Morrow. He refused.

The prominent slot on the airtime where Morrow's *See It Now* series had originally aired, had been replaced by the CBS bosses with game shows. Game shows drew large audiences, especially when a lot of money was involved, and a contestant performed extremely well (such as in the double or quite of *The \$64,000 Question*). That popularity, however, suffered a stunning blow in 1959 when a conscience-stricken contestant named Charles Van Doren confessed to government authorities that he and other selected contestants had been provided the answers by the program executives before the show. "The Great Payola Scandal" became headline news for a while, of even a congressional investigation; the game hosts and some minor officials were punished but it never reached top management at the networks.



and careers being ruined, through invisible "black lists" and later, through mere suspicion. Corporations, media, Hollywood, all honored the McCarthy blacklist. Some of those who were rejected (usually even without knowing why, until later), often lost friends and families along with their careers. Some died of heartbreak, some committed suicide. A few managed to get themselves legally exonerated in future years, but only a few. The practice of invisible blacklists for a variety of reasons was never really to die out. It has proved to be an effective way to crush individuals against whom there was some objection — usually of some political kind — too flimsy, if that, to prove. It had proved to be a most effective way to sentence for life, without trial.

According to a *New York Times* estimate, by 1954, the number of people blacklisted in radio and TV industries alone, was about 1,500. Just how many thousands in all other businesses had been blacklisted would be hard to estimate. The fact remains, that after all the hysteria, McCarthy and his henchmen *could not provide evidence to convict anyone as a communist spy in even one single case.*

In 1962, John Henry Faulk, blacklisted into poverty for several years, was able to win damages in the Supreme Court. It signalled a change in the mood of the nation and the legal system. Once it was clear that this was so, the TV networks jumped on the bandwagon. The younger generation were soon to be made to believe, by the TV networks, that the networks had been in the forefront of the battle against McCarthy and blacklisting. "The networks now capitalized on indignation [of the country]" writes David Cate "In a 'bold' gesture, CBS presented in 1963 a drama by Ernest Kinoy about an actor blacklisted in the fifties, even though the actor, John Randolph, *was still blacklisted by CBS*" (*italics added*).

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The McCarthy debacle did not affect the popularity of Eisenhower/Nixon, though both had supported McCarthy strongly until it became a political liability to do so. The 1956 Eisenhower/Nixon advertising campaign was a powerfully commercialized one, using all the drama and emotional appeal — and fears — that the image merchants could muster and that TV could project. It was to be later revealed that by 1956, James Hagerty, Mr. Eisenhower's Press Secretary, was in fact conducting the business of the Administration during the President's long illness, and virtually the Acting President. Mr. Eisenhower's own Secretary, Mrs. Ann Whitman, was quoted (in *Newsweek* magazine) to have said, "Usually the answer that the President gives is what Jim (Hagerty) has been saying". Popularity was taking on odd trends in the new TV Society, however. Before the 1956 Presidential elections, Mr. Eisenhower had a severe heart attack, which *increased* his support among voters from 61% to 66%. Mr. Louis Harris, the pollster, explaining that strange increase said, "He is now [after the heart attack] looked upon as being more kindly, wiser and as one voter put it 'kind of a grandfather of the Republic'".

As in 1952, the Democrats nominated Adlai Stevenson for the Presidency in 1956 after considerable controversy. Many Democrats felt he did not have "the presidential image". As an admitted intellectual (an egg-head), he came up once with an outrageous pun: "Egg-heads of the world, unite! We have nothing to lose but our yolk!"; he was completely unsuited for America of the Fifties.

Importantly, the Democrats, noting the heavy advertising and highly professional "product-style" commercials that the Republicans were running for Eisenhower

were keen to match it with whatever funds they had. Stevenson himself was a problem in all this. "The idea that you can merchandise candidates for high office like breakfast cereal ... is the ultimate indignity to the democratic process" he said. And he did not help his public relations with the media by defining a newspaper editor as "one who separates the wheat from the chaff and prints the chaff". Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Nixon were re-elected by a handsome margin.

But if the old war hero had his clear weaknesses as President, he had his convictions and occasionally aired them. It may all have been written for him, but there were two occasions when President Eisenhower warned of dangerous trends. One was after the Mideast War of 1956. Growing awareness and nationalism after the removal of King Farouk of Egypt and the independent thinking of President Nasser caused increasing friction between Egypt and the West. Nasser, angered with the lack of Western concern regarding a homeland for the millions of Palestinian refugees, now existing in tents in the Arab world, and insistent on Egypt's independence from colonial powers, nationalized the Suez Canal. The economic benefits of the Canal to European trade and its revenues to Britain had been enormous. Using the occasion, Israel, Britain and France attacked Egypt. While Britain and France bombarded, Israel — as yet not strong enough militarily — attacked and conquered the Sinai. The U.S. stayed away and even voiced its disapproval of the military action. It was the first and the last time the U.S. (until Carter) sincerely disapproved of Israel's attacks and its refusal to withdraw from occupied territories.

In his *Report To The Nation*, October 31, 1956, President Eisenhower spoke strongly against Israeli aggression and expansionist policies. "Should a nation which attacks and occupies foreign territory in the face of United Nations' disapproval be allowed to impose conditions on its withdrawal? There can be no peace without law if we are to invoke one code of international conduct for those who oppose us, and another for our friends ... We judge no man by his name or inheritance, but by what he does and for what he stands, and so likewise we judge other nations ... Israel insists on a firm guarantee as a condition for withdrawing its forces of invasion... if we agree that armed attack can properly achieve the purpose of the assailant, then I fear we will have turned back the clock of international order. We will have countenanced the use of force as a means of settling differences and gaining national advantages... If the United Nations once admits that international disputes can be settled by using force, then we will have destroyed the very foundation of the [UN] organization and our best hope for establishing a real [new] world order".

President Eisenhower's other memorable comment was in his Farewell Address to the Nation, at the completion of his second term. Eisenhower said: "In councils of government we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the Military-Industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise in misplaced power exists and will persist". Perhaps his parting words were based on personal experience — certainly they were prophetic, as that "potential power" grew to be all consuming in a few short years. The words were also to recall to mind President Washington's parting words — against obsessive alliance with other nations through the efforts of exploitative politicians.

Eisenhower, himself, was clearly not of the belief that "The business of America is business". At one point, in fact he expressed his opinion of what America was. "America is great because it is good" he said, quoting de Tocqueville.

The Eisenhower foreign policy, however, did not coincide with such beliefs. The old general, except when it came to basic issues on which he held strong opinions, was

simply the front, the war hero, the "grandfather figure" for those who ran his administration; mainly this was his Chief of Staff Haggerty, in domestic matters; while Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, his brother Allen Dulles, the Director of the C.I.A., and Vice-President Richard Nixon, along with their friendly Big Business magnates, and media barons (like Harry Luce), formulated foreign policy.

John Foster Dulles had the evangelical streak of Luce; he was for God, Big Business and America, and furiously anti-communist; Nixon, the politician, had a similar image; of Dulles, *Time* magazine said (Aug 31 '51), "the greatest piece of mental machinery I have ever known" quoting "an awed friend" (anonymous, of course). The U.S. foreign policy, the "Eisenhower Doctrine", had what was in reality "the carrot and stick approach"; it gave foreign aid to countries which claimed to be anti-communist (or were threatened by communists); in return, American Big Business had to be given very free access to that country's domestic market and raw material. When there was local unrest against the local government, seen as too corrupt or too friendly to U.S., Big Business, the C.I.A. (now growing at a galloping speed) took care of it. If a local government was not friendly to the U.S., that also became the domain of the C.I.A. Friendly media, like Luce and other Big Business, TV and print reported it suitably to the American people, as a communist-inspired, trouble-making situation.\* From Indo-China to South America, the formula was the same. The U.S., with a spiralling military budget and consequent military production, kept the economy growing with very lucrative foreign trade. There is little doubt that many of those involved in the planning and execution of this U.S. foreign policy were convinced it was best for God and for Country.

Hostilities and competition between communist and Free World had spread to non-political areas as well by the late 1950's. In space exploration, the vital program of knowledge about the universe, there was the ongoing, childlike competition between Russia and the U.S. on who was ahead. That simply meant the duplication of billions of dollars expenditure for similar purposes. Russia's launch of the Sputnik in 1957 ahead of America cast a great national gloom over America. It was more than just the disappointment of being "beaten". It was the shock after years of media-generated conviction of the infinite superiority of Americans over the dumb, fumbling Russians.

Unknown to the general public (and in fact as we shall see, to most outside of the immediate circles), the use of psychological/ motivational research was increasingly prevalent. Some facts were made public occasionally, after their confidentiality was not an issue. Louise Cheskin of the Color Institute, for example, now predicted for the auto industry, that the post-Sputnik shock on the American people was not to be taken lightly. He said that in the auto trade, Americans would be looking for less flashy, even smaller cars in the future. It was a warning that generally was not taken seriously, understandably, perhaps in an industry which had succeeded for so long in convincing America and many parts of the world that their garish, chromium-filled monsters were items of beauty and European cars mere toys.

\* What were known derisively as the Latin America "banana republics" were, ironically, virtually owned by U.S. companies, such as United Fruit Company, (which owned most of the Latin American banana plantations). In the 1970s, it was revealed that of the CIA operations in Latin America, some were financed, at least in part, by multinationals.



## *A Brief New Frontier*

### (i)

How much of the sobriety came from reflection about the "Sputnik", and the fears of atomic destruction through constant tensions with Russia would be hard to say; certainly a desire for a new approach added to the appeal of the dashing young Kennedy. Russia's belligerence, in Hungary and at the Berlin Wall, and America's V-2 spying which broke off the Paris talks were harsh enough realities of possible nuclear destruction, realities that always threatened to upset the euphoria at home. Eisenhower's denials of spying, then the admission, made Americans blush. An approach other than constant threats and confrontations were seen as viable by many Americans now. That went strongly against Nixon, for so long the spokesman, as Congressman, Senator and now, for eight years as Vice-President, for the Cold War. Many voters were by now beginning to be concerned about constant confrontations. McCarthyism was dying; there still were many who did not want to give an inch to Russia, but were frightened with the constant cloud of a nuclear holocaust. On the other hand most voters were either unsure if inexperienced Kennedy could deal with Russia, or were certain he would mess it up.

What gave Kennedy in some ways, a great advantage with the public at large was that he was handsome, young, rich, debonair, and actually high society. Most women and a large section of the young adored him. Most men his age and older, and in particular most Republicans resented him. The Republicans had by now come to represent themselves as the richer, upper class. And here was Democrat Kennedy, the grandson of a saloon keeper, even more newly rich than many Americans, and inspite of the questionable methods by which his father had acquired his fortune, John Kennedy was one of few Americans actually accepted at many levels of European society; perhaps because he had a wife, beautiful, chic, and with European schooling, quite comfortable in European upper crust, and he was himself quick witted, suave. Whatever the reason, he was an international socialite.

To many wealthy Republicans *and* Democrats, this made Kennedy even more abhorrent than the fact that they shared genuine concern about his experience.

And there was another grave cause for suspicion. Not that he was young, "spoilt", or even that he was a Catholic (all of which also bothered many). But more that he was an intellectual: not an egg-head like Stevenson but bad enough. Many Americans even among those who supported him, wished he was not. It confused them, made them ill at ease.

It was ironical that TV should have played an important part in the defeat of Richard Nixon in the 1960 elections but it did. Contrary to popular belief, as we have

seen, Nixon was not naive about the use of TV and advertising techniques. He had pioneered the use of marketing techniques for political success since the early 1950s. Kennedy himself, also used the best minds in advertising just as Nixon had. Image was to play an important part in the presidential choice for 1960, though there were clearly differences on major issues between the two candidates. Kennedy talked of expanding the American Experiment to the world, he talked of the "burden and the glory"; the importance of better education, which along with America's image abroad, had suffered, he said, greatly in the Eisenhower-Nixon years. Kennedy in effect claimed that a new perspective, a new viewpoint, was essential in leadership. Nixon on the other hand, claimed that the Eisenhower-Nixon years had been great, and more of the same was essential.

It was not his programs but TV image, that gave Kennedy the edge with the masses. Towards the last weeks of the campaign, Nixon almost caught up, according to the polls, after launching the most expensive and concentrated TV advertising blitz ever. Nixon's Republicans spent \$2,000,000 in just the last ten days. Theodore White, despite his efforts to practice journalistic restraints, comes through rather clearly in his book, (*The Making of the President 1960*) with sympathetic treatment of Nixon, compared to what he terms the "cockiness" of the Kennedy group; and yet even Mr. White observes "All in all, Monday before election (i.e. one day) saw half a million dollars spent on the Republican television effort...the total figure is somewhere in the neighborhood of \$2,000,000 spent in the last ten days in the greatest electronic effort ever made to move men's minds...he [Nixon] feared the tag of 'Madison Avenue' — therefore his television advisers in New York's advertising agencies, had to install *themselves in an unmarked office on Vanderbilt Avenue in New York, one block east of Madison Avenue, to avoid the label*" (italics added).

But if an intellectual and cultured, Kennedy proved that he was pragmatic as well; he used money to organize and used all the solid talent he could find. Neither did he shy away from the standard political wheeling and dealing; in fact he and his aides seemed to excel at it. And he set about it all with a lot of TV advertising and personal exposure, knowing that it was his strongest asset. He charmed America. And he wooed the Zionists. Even so, the race for the White House had been very close. Many believed that the Kennedy-Nixon TV debates had tipped the scale away from Nixon. It was not what was said, but how it was said. Nixon seemed to suffer from a deep inferiority complex. And his face looked unshaven in the TV lights, his mannerism that of a suspicious character, despite the arduous and detailed work by his TV experts to have him project the best possible image. People were reminded of the "Tricky Dick" label that had come to be attached to him. During the primaries, this image of untrustworthiness of Nixon had been highlighted not by Kennedy, but by the maverick billionaire Republican Governor of New York, Nelson Rockefeller. As a condition for not contesting the Republican nomination against Nixon, Rockefeller had insisted that Nixon spell out — or have spelt out for him — his plans for America's future. Nixon's vague and "secret plans" for the country's future, said Rockefeller, were not good enough. Rockefeller's power prevailed, but not without major skirmishes, and in the public eye. The Republican "platform" was revised according to Rockefeller's "Fourteen Point Compact Of Fifth Avenue".

Kennedy's inauguration itself made many in the Power Cartel apprehensive. The Arts were called upon to participate, fine arts that is, not the commercial variety. In America, fine arts, except as status symbols, had enjoyed very little popularity and received less support. The Rockefeller Panel on the Performing Arts had said, "For

the vast majority of Americans, even those dwelling in cities, a live professional performance of a play, an opera, a symphony, or a ballet is an altogether uncommon experience". In an address to the Academy of Arts and Letters in 1957, William Faulkner said, "The artist has no more actual place in the American culture of today than he has in the American economy of today, no place at all in the warp and the woof, the thews and the thinews, the mosaic of the American Dream".

Now, however, Kennedy not only invited leading artists and writers to attend the inaugural, but he asked Robert Frost to read a poem. "What a joy" said John Steinback, the writer "that literacy is no longer *prima facie* evidence of treason". Lincoln Kirstein said "Thank you for restoring to the United States the pleasures and the powers of the mind". And, as quoted by Dr Arthur Schlesinger (*A Thousand Days*), Archibald McLeish sent a telegram after the inauguration which said "No country which did not respect its arts has ever been great and ours had ignored them too long... (the inaugural address) left me proud and hopeful to be an American — something I have not felt for almost twenty years".

It was not just the social glitter and sophistication that Kennedy seemed to surround himself with that made him different, almost foreign, suspect. The fact was, that as a man of wealth, social position and personal charm, he did not have the standard hang-ups. He talked of eradicating racial and ethnic prejudices, of the world as one (just as Roosevelt had talked about the four universal freedoms and Woodrow Wilson about America's social and moral international responsibilities). Kennedy talked of a New Frontier. He made the standard pitch for military strength but he also claimed the need for more effectively combating communism through using young students as ambassadors of goodwill, to teach in the remotest villages of the developing nations, to be the Peace Corps of America. He enjoyed socializing, but with movie and theater crowds, authors, wits, and wild funloving socialites like himself and his wife. Not that he was not as American as apple pie, in many ways. His partiality towards Israel won him many powerful media supporters. A shrewd politician, he did not by any means ignore the rest of the power structure, or political friends and foes. He even managed to charm many of the doubters, and much of the opposition. He spoke constantly of America's greatness, might, and made it plain that he knew the communists were natural enemies. And he managed not only to be on formal good terms with world leadership, he managed to inspire a wholly different kind of rapport with them, a personal comradeship. He was therefore perceived as "tailored in England" as Theodore White was to say. To many Americans, this made him seem, for all his Americanism, sometimes like a "furriner"; because of his wife, even more so.

He further distressed the Power Structure by soon bringing his brother, Robert, in as the Attorney-General. And the two brothers set about with a program to bring controls on Big Business, the crime syndicates and their infiltration of Labor Union. There was strong objection and never-ending battles to follow on all this.

No one, of course openly objected when Robert Kennedy launched out against the Crime Syndicates known to be very much alive and well in America, though many were now into "legitimate business". The new Attorney-General succeeded in proving that Jimmy Hoffa, leader of the Teamsters Union, the largest union in America, had underworld connections and had perjured himself.\*

\* When he later became President, Nixon had Hoffa released. In 1975 Hoffa disappeared and is believed killed in a crime syndicate war.



The people in larger numbers than before had now come to idolize Kennedy; Jack and "Jackie" Kennedy symbolized an old yearning among Americans, to have a royalty, which somehow would uplift their own social status. In the Kennedys, they saw not just Royalty but Youth, Beauty, and "a touch of Camelot". And suddenly, many Americans were beginning to realize that leadership like Kennedy's was good for America's prestige around the world. But this Kennedy popularity made some of the powerful even more furious.

Then came knowledge of the Bay of Pigs fiasco, the CIA-backed attack by ex-Cubans on Communist Cuba; Kennedy was reportedly at first not in favor, but had then agreed to the invasion planned during the Eisenhower regime. It was a fiasco, losing Kennedy himself a lot of respect. But he more than made up for it by his remarkable daring and, to the world, frightening stand against Khrushchev, in the Cuban Missile crisis of 1962. Russia had to back down at the eleventh hour. America's prestige and that of its President soared.

To add to the discomfiture of his enemies, Kennedy now joked that after his eight years there would be Robert Kennedy and then young Teddy Kennedy to follow. His forceful stand on equal rights for the blacks (still called "negroes"), the Federally-backed forced entry of Meredith, a black, into the University in Alabama invited more open hate; opposition to Kennedy had by now become so intense in some circles, that he was advised not to undertake the fatal trip to Dallas, Texas. But he did. And he was shot dead.

The Warren Commission appointed by President Johnson to investigate his killing, returned the same verdict that the FBI and the police had already given; that Lee Harvey Oswald was a communist, pro-Castro fanatic who had killed Kennedy. There was no one else involved, it said, and Jack Ruby (Rubenstein) the owner of the sleazy night club (who had somehow managed to break through all the police security into the police station and shoot Oswald dead, before he had even been properly interrogated), had done so out of deep affection for Kennedy, not because he wanted to silence Oswald.

Many books have been written, showing grave inaccuracies in the collection of data, the interrogation of witnesses, the physical improbabilities of a one-man operation; reportedly a lot of facts had not been investigated, and by an odd coincidence, more than two dozen persons who were important witnesses in one way or another have either died natural deaths, or accidental deaths, or been killed, within a year of Kennedy's assassination. More recently, some more startling facts have been revealed in Senate investigations. It was to be admitted (in 1977/78) that Lee Harvey Oswald was in fact — at least for a while — employed by the FBI, that he had close connections with the CIA. Also there is evidence to suggest that his "communist" posture may well have been a front to gain him entry into Russia and Cuba for American intelligence agencies. Jack Ruby who killed Oswald, in police custody, was known to have had close Crime Syndicate ties.

Public demand as a result of knowledge that various pieces of information and photographs and an onlooker's film of the shooting had not even been examined by the Warren Commission, had led to the creation of a Senate Subcommittee on Assassinations in 1978, to delve into the killings of John Kennedy and Martin Luther King. Among several other surprise pieces of evidence, that had been uncovered before these hearings, was the fact that a reputed Crime Syndicate leader in Miami had told a colleague, concerned about having to suffer through yet another Kennedy presidential term, "Don't worry about Kennedy's re-election. He is going to be hit".

This conversation took place fifteen days before the assassination of Kennedy. The taped information had in fact, been received by the FBI office in Florida, *before* the assassination, and had somehow not been transmitted or had (in the opinion of an ex-FBI man working in Texas at the time) been destroyed. Also in 1976 two crime syndicate figures, giving evidence to the Senate Committee on plots to kill Castro at CIA orders, as well as further information of the Kennedy killing, were found killed before their testimonies were complete.

A theory opposing the foregoing, voiced by the Secret Service agencies and some members of Congress, is that Oswald was originally a communist and that the killing of Kennedy was a Castro-inspired retaliation.

The Senate Committee hearing, on the assassination was to be labelled a pure "whitewash" by some critics. Many aspects of the 1978 House Committee hearings were also to be similarly dubbed (including the dramatic change in the testimony of a crime syndicate witness); but the House Committee did conclude — for the first time — that there was a conspiracy of more than one person in the killing.

(ii)

On November 22, 1963, (the day Kennedy was killed), Lyndon Johnson became President; he assured the grieving nation that he would carry Kennedy's aspirations to fruition. Methodically, with all the power and expertise of an experienced politician and former Senate Whip, he proceeded to do just that. With his enormous clout over Congress, he beat down opposition (recognising its weakened position in a nation still mourning Kennedy) to carry out his "War On Poverty", the passage of the Civil Rights Act, social legislation to aid the poor and the minorities. In two years, he got more passed the weakened opposition in Congress than had even been done since Roosevelt. His aim, he now said, was The Great Society, a melting pot in the real sense. Social aid programs began to grow and, later, to get beyond the hands of the dedicated into the hands of exploiters. Misuse was to become rampant, as the indolent made false claims on the Welfare rolls, and doctors fleeced Medicare with exaggerated bills. It was an era when the nation, mourning Kennedy, was liberal, and the oppressed had been recognized for aid, in some ways, for the first time; the fact that nearly 20% of Americans lived in abject poverty, and their children had severe malnutrition had never before been recognized in The Land Of Plenty. It was now emotionally difficult to screen applicants too severely. The consequent abuse was to be dramatized by the Op-Cons later, though very little was made of the far greater abuses by the medical practitioners until Carter became President.

In 1964, Johnson was elected (for the full term) as President by the widest margin in history; Goldwater his Republican opponent had been too hawkish even for the Republican Party; he had strongly advocated the bombing of China and Indo-China.

Though Goldwater's support had been limited, the bulk of it had come from the extremely wealthy and extremely "right-wing" Op-Cons, who were holding the Torch for God, Country, Big Business. The Goldwater camp had selected a movie actor to be the spokesman on TV, in time bought for Goldwater's political campaign. That actor, Ronald Reagan, was known as an actor of very limited ability, but with many 'B' (and some 'C') movies to his credit; he had been a familiar face on TV for many years, however, as the spokesman for General Electric and on the *Death Valley Days* series. The script for his speech in support of Goldwater had been prepared by the

Goldwater staff, but he had done a good job of presentation. The Op-Con big shots felt he could be trained to be their spokesman from a political office itself. They soon decided to make him the Republican candidate for the 1966 gubernatorial elections in California.

Shortly after the presidential elections, Johnson began to sound less peaceful with regard to Vietnam than he had during the campaign (when Goldwater had advocated bombardments). Earlier, it seems, his administration had been convinced that the South Vietnamese, and the American "advisers" would keep the North Vietnamese from creating a communist nation — which in fact, the local populace apparently would have voted in favor of in the past decade; first France, and now the U.S. would not let this happen. Local patriots, furious at the ongoing foreign interference, were resorting to violence towards others or, as in the case of some Buddhist priests, burning themselves to death in public.

The effort to "contain" communism had worked in Korea, where the North and South had been arbitrarily divided through the U.N. Whatever his real intent now (to contain communism in the North or to defeat it entirely), Johnson got the Gulf of Tonkin resolution passed in Congress. It enabled him to send troops to Vietnam, not "advisers"; now, even though it was still undeclared, it was War.



## 10

# *Prelude to the Black and Youth Revolt*

(i)

Unaware as yet, the country was headed for turbulent times. In the Civil Rights movement, blacks were receiving increasing support from white liberals, but they were, understandably, becoming impatient, angry, frustrated. The laws against discrimination were on the books now — they had been since Lincoln's Emancipation proclamation a century ago, in subsequent legislation and more detailed in the new Civil Rights Act — but blatant prejudice continued. So great was the neglect of the poor (blacks and whites) that even government authorities did not know until later, the size and depth of illiteracy and poverty; about 23% of Americans were functionally illiterate; 20% lived below the poverty level; old people had taken to eating dog food and cat food as part of their diet; children in the hundreds of thousands were suffering from severe malnutrition, in much the same way as millions do in the Third World.

These conditions did not apply only to blacks, or indeed to other minorities; there were many whites in the same condition, though the percent of the minorities living in such deprived conditions was much higher.

Most of the blacks were being curbed from violent outbreaks by the Gandhian non-violent resistance philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Even so, there were occasional skirmishes and minor confrontations with the police; the blacks accused the police of brutality and discrimination more loudly and more frequently now. Media gave it little coverage, though individual commentators occasionally voiced concern for the lot of the blacks.

Media also generally ignored — and when it did not, it mocked — the first rumblings of the youth movement. TV sometimes had jocular "fillers" about the more outlandish incidents of the "hippie" movement, seen as an even more bizarre development of the earlier "beatniks".

Select groups of educated youth were, however, examining contemporary American values with great concern, with an even more critical and more sophisticated eye than the "beatniks" had. The *cultural* gap between them and their parents was much wider than that of a generation; they were far better educated and had — with prosperity — more time to think of issues, other than keeping body and soul together. Bob Dylan was popular; the Beatles music had now taken all of the American young by storm, though not as yet the philosophy that was to develop with it. In 1965, a free clothing store for the needy had already been started by an ivy league graduate in San Francisco; there were *genuine* seekers of "vibes" among the Flower Children of Haight-Ashbury. Curfew on youth enforced on Sunset Boulevard in 1966 was to become a confrontation with the police authorities which was at a level hardly

commensurate with such trivialities. The Turtles were recording these early rumblings; "Hey, there, what's that sound, everybody look what's goin' on".

Had it not been for the Vietnam War, it is possible that, like the beatniks, these youth would have been ignored by the media and would have remained another passing youth sub-culture. The Beatles message itself may have been less vital. After all, the vast majority of American youth were into the same "plastic" values as all Americans; if anything, their pop music was notable only for the fact that its lyrics were often peculiar sounds, repetitive, often innane; it was still the "beach, blanket, bingo" era of Annette Funacello, Frankie Avalon, et al.

To understand why the subsequent Youth Values Movement shook the American Power Structure as much as it did, we must take a closer look at this giant monolith that now ruled America and was already the most powerful force on earth; what President Eisenhower had called the "Military-Industrial Complex". Year after year, it had grown by leaps and bounds; its strategists had found the formula for success at home and abroad; the Secret Services had become its watchdogs, not that of the Constitution; its media had found the Formula to keep the public happy and convinced that the "Military-Industrial Complex" was in fact The American Flag, and "what was good for General Motors was good for America".

Kennedy and Johnson had not been as close to this Complex as the previous regime; they had 'jawboned' corporations; Kennedy had commenced some changes in foreign policy which would have affected the monolith but Johnson was soon consumed by his own War. The lethal power of TV was not of major concern, however; Kennedy's personal charm had come to be popular with the media rank and file (though not with the ownership); Johnson, the former school teacher, now a multi-millionaire, had family interests in television in Austin, Texas.

The Military-Industrial Complex had too many skeletons in the closet, that it knew about; it had others that it had not even thought about; yet others that in its complacency, it had allowed to develop unnoticed. The unprecedented success it had had in the past two decades of redirecting America in its own image had led to a regimented routine, without self-examination. Don't make waves. Don't mess with success.

When the Youth Values movement was to become insistent on raising moral issues, when it claimed to reject materialism, and appeared to have spread to the vast majority of American youth, there was shock and even near-hysteria for the Complex. After the 1967 Middle East War, the powerful Zionist lobby (along with its representation within M-I Complex), was similarly concerned about such ideology of moral inquiry. *Status Quo* was required; back to the 1950s values. Individually, corporations, the military branches, the TV networks were often in fierce competition with one another. Now there was great need to pool resources of their strategists into what may be called the Power Cartel to fight the common enemy, Change and The New Morality. We must examine the dangers as the Power Cartel must have seen them, in outline, in each of these institutions, and why it was so vital to crush the morality movement before it did too much damage.

(ii)

"Make love, not war" was the youth chant, but the U.S. economy had, by now, become inextricably tied to war. In many ways, Franklin Roosevelt's reforms had

helped greatly in overcoming the many monopolistic abuses and price-fixing; weakened by the crush of the Depression, Big Business was also unable to dictate terms to the economy, to insist on special privileges from the law (or else...) because the worst had happened; America had become a buyers' market for consumer goods. But the real boost for the economy had come during the War, with much of the Allies' wartime requirement being produced in the U.S.A.

With the Cold War, the creation of the Department of Defence in 1947, along with the CIA, the anti-communist hysteria, that war-time footing of the economy had been — if anything — escalated. By the end of the 1950s, at least 10% of the American work force was working either for the military or for one of its giant suppliers and their tributaries. Towards the end of the 1960s, there were 3.5 million military personnel at home and abroad, with 4.3 million dependents. Additionally, there were nearly 2 million civilians employed by the Department of Defence, with their 3.5 million dependents; those therefore dependant directly on the Defence Dept. alone totalled nearly 14 million. Most of the 500 largest U.S. corporations were in one way or another either supplying, or hoping to supply to the Defence Dept; major media, through parent or subsidiary, were very much in it too; the mood, therefore, in all of them, and among their millions of employees, was pro-military for the most part. One of the important criteria used by the military Brass (there were other less commendable reasons too) was to ensure that corporations dealing with Defence were very loyal.

But if these current job-related considerations influenced many Americans regarding Defence expenditures, there were other facts which they were either not aware of, or had not considered. In 1965, military contracts totalled \$42,000,000,000.\* But the relatively small corporations (with no more than 1,000 employees) received only 17.5% of such business. Only 11% of the contracts were awarded after advertising for bids; 60.3% were awarded after negotiations with only one potential supplier corporation.

In fiscal 1968, 100 largest defence contractors received 67.4% of all contracted defence expenditures. The ten largest — General Dynamics, Lockheed, General Electric, United Technologies, Hughes Aircraft, AT&T, Boeing, McDonnell-Douglas, North American Rockwell and General Motors — were reported to receive nearly 50% of all this. In future years, Northrup, TRW and Dow Chemicals were to join the elite group.

There was waste, enormous waste; in luxuries, astronomical costs for sundries, unnecessary orders for items, often returned to the supplier at 10% of the purchase price. Much of this was to be revealed sporadically in later years, as we shall see.

There were nearly 550 military bases in the U.S.; but there were also over 430 military bases in foreign countries. The estimated annual cost of maintaining the foreign bases alone was \$5,000,000,000. As wild inflation hit foreign lands in the 1970s, these costs more than doubled immediately.

Aside from being the largest industry, the U.S. Defence Dept. was one of the

\* Figures quoted here are from the Defence Dept's own published literature; it should be remembered that all such figures were to be dwarfed by the 1980s, when Reagan's annual military budget was soon beyond \$300,000,000,000; many critics have charged that the Defence budget is distorted to seem less than it is; that items of great expenditure such as much of NASA's operations are military-related; and Veteran's benefits and pensions are not included in it; in 1976, a Lansing, Michigan Research Group, published its findings which claimed that more than 50% of the entire U.S. annual budget, is in one way or another, related to the military.



largest landowners in history. Real estate property in 1965 was 29,000,000 acres, valued by the Defence Dept. at purchase price of \$38,7000,000,000. What that value would be today, with skyrocketing property values, is hard to estimate. Additionally, the Army Civil Works Division had 9,000,000,000 acres.

From the purely economic standpoint, the military industry was not the best one for continued economic progress of any nation, especially in an era when new advanced equipment and weaponry became obsolete almost as soon as they had been produced. Stock piles that developed when the nation was not at War were wasted; export of military arsenals could be beneficial to the economy, and the U.S. did try to export, was already the largest arms exporter in the world (soon to be responsible for over 60% of all arms trade, when Nixon-Kissinger went on an aggressive arms-export trade campaign) and the U.S. gave military aid to close allies; since World War 2, it had given, by 1967, \$18,000,000,000 to NATO allies and — the figures have never been revealed — undetermined billions to Israel.

Youth leaders were to call the FBI and CIA neo-fascists; there was vague general knowledge that the CIA had grown into a monolith of its own, with questionable operations. But it was only later — at the 1975 Senate Hearings and thereafter — that some of the facts were to become known. Congressional Committees who were required to oversee the CIA, even approve its budget, did not in fact do so through the years, fearful of offending the CIA. It had mutli-million dollar "front" organizations, representatives in embassies and consulates, used media foreign correspondents, even missionaries as sources of information. It carried out assassination plots against adversaries including heads of state — eight separate assassination attempts against Fidel Castro of Cuba alone. And from the 1950s onwards, it had been involved in Mind Control experiments of various kinds; in a 1979 ABC TV News, special interviews were conducted with those upon whom mind control drugs had been tried *without their knowledge*; they ranged from military personnel to a wife of a Canadian official (now apparently permanently damaged) in a sanatorium. And, it was reported, the CIA had given LSD (the hallucinatory drug) to be tried by prostitutes on their "Johns" in San Francisco; the theory expressed was that it was through this channel that LSD had first filtered to the San Francisco "Flower Children" and then to the youth across the U.S.

The reality simply did not agree with the hundreds of glamorous spy novels, movies and TV shows.

And then there was the FBI. All through the years, the FBI had a world-wide reputation as a Crime Fighter, especially effective against crime syndicates, and J. Edgar Hoover, the unchallenged hero. Many movies and TV series had enhanced this image. There is no doubt that the FBI had many great achievements over the years, but in the 1960s, (again, as the 1975 Senate hearings were to reveal, and as many ex-FBI officials were to testify and write about), there had been many changes. For one thing, it was alleged that the FBI had actually joined hands occasionally with crime syndicates during the Cold War, to catch communists. By the 1960s, Hoover himself, was said to have degenerated in many ways, including misuse of funds and FBI staff for personal gains. Hoover, by the 1960s, frightened Presidents, with his personal dossiers on them. And he was not above planting false data, as he was later reported to have done, to discredit Martin Luther King Jr.

As for the military itself, its objective was to kill and destroy; there was no recycling, just economic waste of human lives and property. In modern times, conquest of other lands is not permitted by world opinion — with one solitary

exception, of course! So that economic benefit did not exist. In fact, major powers like the U.S. usually ended up paying reparation costs to the enemy after the War, so it was, in effect, a double cost. There was also the enormous loss in productive use of manpower — anyone who has visited the U.S. overseas bases and heard tales of utter boredom of those stationed there, or on assignments like the Seventh Fleet, knew it.

Above all, it had been shown — and shown many times in future years — that every \$1 Billion spent on the military, if used instead in a civilian commercial operation, it would produce 10,000 *more* jobs in consumer product-related industry and 21,000 *more* jobs in the service-related industry.

Even if the average American understood all this generally, and even if he wanted to do something about it, he was still apt to be concerned more about the economy of his own home, his own job, during any transition away from military expenditures. By now, the cumulative impact of TV hard-sell made all the standard material acquisition so fiercely important for “upward mobility”; the middle-aged American could vividly recall the Depression, and did not ever want to risk the agonies of unemployment again, if he could help it. Youth, on the other hand, would have no such immediate concern.

Cynics said that even the Cold War had been artificially heightened, that the Korean “police action” and the current Vietnam War undertaken to use up the stockpile of military arms, and to revive in the American public, the extreme need to spend, and continue to spend heavily, on the military. The clandestine disclosures by Daniel Ellsberg of *The Pentagon Papers* were certainly a powerful argument in this respect. Nevertheless, there were many Americans, in government and civilian life, who were genuinely convinced that the communist world was a great threat, and with the invention of nuclear weaponry, there was no alternative but to be strong enough to deter any communist aggression. The Vietnam War was seen for the first few years by most Americans as an essential undertaking to contain communism.

It was to cost \$77 million each day to the American tax payer.

### (iii)

Youth advocates protested against excessive materialism in America, and demanded a change in American lifestyle, in effect, a more Europeanized appreciation of the finer things in life. And they charged Big Business with corruption, of themselves and the government.

Big Business had never had it so good, as they did throughout the 1950s despite recessionary periods in the national economy; aside from government contracts, the trend towards Bigness and More Bigness was a glamorous phenomenon which major media presented in all its finery; its public image could not have been better. There were a lot of benefits from size; the text books gave them all; buying in great quantities, therefore cheaper, being able to afford professionals, advertise and merchandise more effectively, selling more, therefore lowering the price, employing more, and so on. Large packaged-goods corporations bought “vertically”, e.g., breakfast cereal and TV Dinner manufacturers bought farms, set up their own distribution and trucking companies; soon, they were owning all of the production cycle from growing the product to processing to packaging and distribution. All of this led to greater efficiency, modernization and cut costs drastically for the conglomerate. They spread out to Europe and then to every country where they could. Even



large retailers were becoming Big Business as they swallowed up "Ma and Pa" shops, set up sparkling supermarkets and drug chains, had their own distributing company, then their own brands.

Major corporations "diversified", bought other corporations, sometimes in allied fields, then any business that looked good; sometimes for profit, at other times for tax purposes. Tax laws favored them so that the more corporations there were under one parent company, the more opportunities to spread profits, to obtain tax credits in some, tax write-offs in others; there were the anti-trust laws, but a friendly government looked the other way (or protested occasionally so the public would believe it did not); foreign markets for raw material and for the finished product were almost limitless for the really mighty multinationals by now; the next step was to use the cheap labor in some of these neo-colonized areas for part production, sometimes most of the production and have — as in the case of a few electronic products — only a few parts and assembling done in the U.S., so that the "Made in U.S.A." tag could be used.

The American marketing system in all its aspects was the most efficient and the most advanced, but there were problems after a point for the American economy as we shall examine later. There were problems in some of the foreign economies too. In Europe, where the multinationals had been set up with local brand names, seemingly entirely local, there was not any real problem; in Third World countries, where the leaders — from the Shah of Iran, (placed back on the throne by the CIA in 1953, after he had been forced to abdicate for three days) to Somoza in Nicaragua (where the son was made the leader after the father died in 1959) there were problems that had been handled but in some of the other countries, there was opposition growing in size (communist-inspired, media always said), there were questions raised in these countries about the strings tied to foreign aid; the price of raw material; the extensive, sometimes monopolistic ownership by the multinationals of farmlands and plantations; the excessive pricing of the finished product; the highly publicized "free enterprise" propagation on the one hand, and then the levy of duties or quotas on imports into the U.S. of some exports from these poorer countries. And the growing irritation with the ridiculed image of the countries in American media; the attitude of the "ugly American" visitor enhanced these images; love and respect for America, if so fervent after World War 2, was waning, even though aping American fads and styles grew, as American visual media and slick American magazines deepened their penetration of these lands.

In fairness to American media, it must be said that there may well have been a few (more than the rare exemption who did) who may have wanted to warn of the consequences of these policies, somehow, overcome editorial bias, inform the American people. However, Cold War hysteria and the Blacklists were still recent memories .... McCarthy had died, his henchmen and Nixon were in relative obscurity but the public had been suitably conditioned to associate any criticism of government, Big Business and military as communist-inspired at least. It needed any one of the Op-Con leadership to levy such accusation and a large segment of the public would be willing to believe it. From the business standpoint — apart from any other — media could not afford to take such chances.

The giant conglomerates were, however, becoming too unwieldy, inflexible, at home. The mammoth size to which the conglomerate, the multinational, had grown made it essential to have standardized operating procedures. They were public companies, though the controlling shares was held either by members of the old



tycoon's family (the members now often lived in villas and castles in Europe, no longer transporting them to the U.S.) or new tycoons.

The Board of Directors were strictly answerable to the tycoons, whether they were active in corporate affairs or not; often the tycoon, when active, concentrated on Washington and the selection of political candidates to support (with other tycoons); on lobbying efforts, on pressure upon the President, his Cabinet and friendly Congressmen. A growing number of conglomerates had show business and political celebrities on their Board who were also very useful at lobbying in Washington. Often they had reciprocal arrangements; the Chairman of one conglomerate was on the Board of another, and vice versa; major share holding of another conglomerate also spread direct interest among the powerful. In the 1950s, the conglomerates that made it really big were those closest to the Administration — IT & T (International Telephone & Telegraph) for instance, at one stage, had about 250 subsidiary companies, despite anti-trust cases, ranging from bakeries and car rental to insurance companies and of course defence contracts.

Powerful lobbies now controlled the government. The military had a powerful fulltime lobby; major multinationals had their own exclusive lobby, but also shared common interests through other lobbies of all manufacturers, including the Chamber of Commerce; the anti-gun lobby (led by The National Rifle Association) was one of the most powerful, and it received strong support from some military Brass and major defence contractors, through common image objectives; even President Johnson, with his great political power over Congress, was soon to be defeated by it; the Zionist lobby was growing more powerful by the year, also aided by other lobbies and power forces with emotional or pragmatic links to Israel. Even the trade unions had a powerful lobby, though their frequently reported ties with crime syndicates (especially the Teamster Union) and with some tycoons and military brass made their precise objectives somewhat confusing, if not contradictory, over the years (for instance, the Unions usually supported heavy military expenditures, even claiming that it created jobs, yet all studies showed that the same money in any civilian industry produced far more jobs).

And all lobbies had their clout with major media, their most powerful weapon to keep the American public in line. Major media already had incestuous links with diverse multinationals and the military, through their parent or subsidiaries, growing more complex by the year, as major media itself went into more acquisitions.

With such common interests, politically and commercially, on one hand, and fierce competition against each other, on the other hand, there was even greater need in the control from the top in each corporation within the conglomerate, in the U.S. and overseas. There were occasional policy changes, based upon recent deals between conglomerates and lobbies; sometimes mergers, or quasi-mergers (the latter especially during the Kennedy-Johnson years, when anti-trust laws had to be considered); concentrated short-term profit efforts in some product categories, easing off, even seeking losses in others. Top tax experts were either on the Board of Directors or ex-officio members of it.

These instructions and control had to come from the top. And Standard Operating Procedure were critical to regimentize the army of employees in all day-to-day operations within the conglomerate, within each of its corporations in the U.S. and overseas.

For this reason also, fragmentation of responsibility (and consequent expertise) had, by the mid 1960s, become the normal business practice. The standardization

included everyone; not just the assembly line, and the junior office staff, but most of all, it included the executives; whose entire lifestyle was regimentized — beliefs, outlook, the one-wife-two-children-suburban-home requirement, sober dress coercion (European mockery of the past loud cloths had by now led to extreme sobriety); above all complete loyalty to the corporation, and complete loyalty to the Corporate world objectives.

In its own way, it was extremely ironical; Big Business, as the loudest opponent of communism, always pointed — correctly — to the fact that under communism, there was no individual freedom. The executive did have the choice to leave the corporate life, but then he would find himself — except in rare cases — entirely unqualified for any other pursuit; in many cases, loyalty and willingness to be entirely regimentized were his best stock-in-trade; by far the vast majority of executives of the 1960s had their origins in poverty — had moved from tenements and small towns to the elite postures of suburban living and affluence. Most were more than happy to abide by the Corporate dictates.

It is important, however, to understand in brief and in non-technical outline, just how carefully regimentized and studied, the decision-making process was by now, in the marketing operation of a large corporation. Marketing research, as portrayed by the movies and TV programs, had come to be taken by the public (as so much else was) as the prototype of the real world — the heavily spectacled, numbers-oriented, studious individual who was even more laughable because his statistics were so often misleading and inaccurate. Visual media also, always showed a great idea — for a product, an advertisement, a jingle — as being thought up by a creative mind, and if liked, immediately implemented.

Nothing could have been further from the truth in the real world. By the 1960s, marketing research was a multi-billion dollar business, and with the demand for more accuracy and more dimensions to measure, new techniques and improvements on old techniques mushroomed by the year.

In brief, standardized and controlled, predictable behavior had become essential in the commercial world; the youth movement for new values and lifestyle was an enemy that unwittingly would have shattered all that.

There are three critical reasons why we must note — at least in broadest outline — the depth and dimensions of marketing research as it directed every stage of the marketing operation in the large corporation: (i) to understand how important *status quo* of American consumer behavior was to Big Business in this respect, even though this was not the best for the nation's economy in its excesses; (ii) how this standardization mechanized the lives of corporate executives themselves, who, through rationalization, had to become increasingly obsessed with materialism as the sole benefit for this psychological strait-jacket, which stunted their growth as human individuals throughout their lives; this obsession led to more problems in the "generation gap" with their children; (iii) to understand how skilled and intricate corporate business research had to be, because many millions of dollars rode on decisions made by it, and accuracy could be checked in the real marketing world, each time, in the ensuing period; (iv) political polls, on the other hand, which were to become more and more prolific, could be and were, *simplistic* because the sponsors and pollsters themselves benefited from the publicity of the polls as a news item, but did not stand to gain or lose enormous sums of money upon these measures of public opinion (we shall examine the real dangers inherent from such polls later). The public, in fact, was so deluded, that by this time it would even accept the show-biz "research"



conducted by TV game shows for questions to their contestants, as professional research.

The large consumer products manufacturing corporations were the trend-setters in consumer research; they employed the best minds and paid the most money; other corporations however — service, industrial, large retailers — were quick to follow their directions as did major political lobbies, the military, the movie studios and other major media\*; major politicians were also soon to use many of these techniques, especially after they had developed into highly sophisticated and accurate measures of the public mind.

In the large corporation, there was quantitative and qualitative research. Every stage of the marketing operation was tested through quantitative studies i.e., studies in which large samples were used, skillfully selected to reflect the "universe" of the target market. We need not go into the variety of techniques used except to note that various techniques were used to test out product concepts, the product itself (at various stages of development); consumer attitudinal tests; a series of advertising tests — for TV alone, ranging from copy strategy, storyboard to comprehensive, pre-air, on-air and Day-After-Recall; there were tracking studies, in-store packaging, pricing, merchandising studies, test-market studies and so on; published marketing and media on-going studies (such as Nielsen Food and Drug Index, BRI, Simmons, the weekly Nielsen and BRI TV program rating, LNA etc.) were essential weekly and bi-weekly rituals. There were trade studies, sales promotion studies, R & D's own viability studies, clinical studies, and so on.

For all the research conducted by and for the corporation (by reliable research houses and in consultation with its ad agencies), extreme care was mandatory in the selection of words for each question; in their sequence, in having "check points" and "probes" to ensure that the respondent (the consumer) had been truthful and constant. "Open ended" questions (those that probed the respondent to given reasons why he or she had expressed such an opinion) were critical. There were many intricate "cross-tabulations" based upon such answers and others to get what was known as "meat" from the studies. Pilot studies (with very few respondents) were conducted to check and double-check the wordings, the sequence of questions, the need for more probes. The field staff of interviewers had to be very carefully trained; integrity was key; they had to also know the importance of "pre-conditioning" and bias that they could generate if not careful, even with the slight inflexion in their tone; methods of interviewing (personal, telephone) were tested over years to determine which were the best suited for difference studies (cost and reliability).

As the "bugs" were ironed out, major corporations has come to standardize their questionnaires for the various types of studies; some had developed "house" techniques. By the late 1960s, after literally hundreds of studies each year, each major corporation had developed and computerized vast banks of "historical data" from "norms" i.e., measures to indicate success or failure. By now so rigid had the

\* Television networks had research houses with a bank of WATTS lines working full time on consumer probes; the new TV program (or movie) was tested in New York and Hollywood, by inviting many groups of the public (random) to view the program in a specially-designed suite where they were required to press a "red" button when they disliked something very much and a "black" button when they "liked" something; a computer in another room graphed all the responses, so that through thousands of such studies over the years, it could be determined what kind of situations the public most liked or disliked; they were "deep probed" by psychologists after each session too, so "reasons why" were obtained, as well.



questionnaire wording and sequence become that unless it was critical, no changes were made — otherwise the standardized relations between past and current data could be invalidated.\* The more studious executives memorized much of the pertinent data, so that at executive conferences, they could somehow spout a suggestion based upon past research, which would be the most telling argument, even win a nod of approval (“Good point”) from a President, and make the job secure; intense rivalry between the corporate giants existed on the fiercely guarded data developed by each; highly paid security men and procedures were strictly maintained; industrial espionage was rampant, though for their mutual protection, the giants made pacts; for instance, Proctor & Gamble, Lever Brothers and Colgate Palmolive (detergent, tooth paste and soap giants) had mutually agreed not to employ any executive from each other’s corporation for at least six months after the executive had left that corporation; the restriction applied to their individual ad agencies too (each used several different agencies).

There were important, psychological reasons too why executives had come to be extremely dependent upon research data; it was a security blanket for even the talented executive; all actions taken upon research findings were defensible up the corporate structure, and so while a few of the creative talents were wont to feel shackled by the strict directive from research, (and standardized research at that) most had come to accept the shackles. From agency copywriters and visualizers and TV production crew to product directors and presidents they all read and followed the relevant analyses from the research data or had it explained to them.

Sometimes the obsession with testing at every stage of the marketing operation could be self-defeating. In one instance, a major conglomerate whose European R & D had developed the first enzyme pre-soak, delayed so much in its testing in the U.S. that a competitor was able to rush through its test and become the first to introduce it nationally in the U.S. These dangers were even greater when a truly innovative product had been developed.

This writer, came up with the idea of the first disposal douche, then left the conglomerate after the product had been developed and ready for market tests. By the time the product had been through a lengthy test marketing stage (the company was very systems-oriented) competitors had seen it, developed their own brands (with, incidentally better packaging and brand names), gone national and garnered leadership of what became a multi-billion dollar market.

Used judiciously, marketing research not only worked, it was essential. The days when ideas were executed on judgement, and spelled great success when they worked, were over. Now the shooting of a 30 sec TV commercial\*\* was preceded after all the research discussions were in, by several days of planning, in meticulous details, of set design, model selection and costumes, because the more sophisticated research has to be strictly followed. Millions of dollars rode on it all. The average TV commercial shooting took all day — sometimes days — because of the extreme need to follow directives in detail.

\* So great was the emphasis to maintain comparability with past data, that in one major conglomerate, a top executive had issued a memorable directive: “Institutionalize the mistake”; the wording of a standard question had been found to be clumsy, in some ways even ambiguous; it was easy to correct with rephrasing. The executive felt that it was better to keep the old wording, rather than endanger comparability with past data.

\*\* In the late 1960s, intensive and ongoing studies had shown that the 30 sec commercial was better value, generally, than the one minute commercial.

It was this corporate world that the youth rebels were accusing of gross materialism, of being "Big Brother", and millions of rebellious youth were soon to discard sartorial and personal fineries, seeking instead the deliberately shabby and faded shirt, blouse and patched jeans, the older the better. The no-bra and no-makeup style could itself spell disaster of billions of dollars each year to business.

The youth market was about \$43,000,000,000 a year from cloths, autos, soft drinks, music and other pastimes, personal care products, food etc. But Youth also had come to symbolize modern marketing; the youth image was central to American marketing for all ages. Also, the youth of today would be the heads of household tomorrow; a lot of long-term planning had gone into commencing to winning "brand loyalty" among youth.

*Emotionally disgruntled youth was also attacking dangerously with calls for changes in lifestyles; if that ever really caught on, all the many years of data, and all the expertise developed in marketing from that past experience would be destroyed, an incalculable damage to corporations.*

There were other critical concerns with youth probes into Big Business practices. Though corporations gained a lot from the standardization, new products were where money could be made; corporations, from the social responsibility standpoint, were highly vulnerable here, new products of real merit and public benefit required considerable outlay in costs; Research and Development scientists were kept busy on new products, but these had to be new products that were a variation on existing products, not those that required months, even years to experiment with, and perhaps never really end in a triumphant new cold remedy, or an all purpose cleanser that could clean cloths and the windows and floors with suitable water dilution, and really be as good as the variety of products for these purposes.

It could happen; or it would be an enormous waste of time and money. Even if it worked, *how would the pharmaceutical company or household products company President justify it to the Board and the tycoon owners?* What kind of a businessman would allocate all that time and money on an unsure project, and one which was going to make several of the corporation's own brands extinct?

A few years hence, in the Ford Pinto death cases, it was to be revealed that Ford executives knew that the Pinto had dangerous location of the gas tank, that it could lead to an explosion on collision, even death. Relocation of it would have cost an estimated \$5-11 per car. Internal memos were to be publicized in the court cases to show that Ford executives had carefully considered the damages that would accrue in the event of death and injuries to owners, worked out the statistical probability of its happening, had the costs accruing in damages from such death and injuries worked out, and decided it would be *cheaper* for the corporation in the long run to let the gas tanks stay where they were. And they did.

While this might sound extremely callous, it must be understood that this is precisely how a twenty-four hour a day executive's mind was supposed to work. Profits before anything, the corporate interests before anything, in a fiercely competitive market place. In 1965, the remarkable consumer crusader Ralph Nader wrote, *Unsafe At Any Price*, a daring expose of the built-in dangers in the American car; it shocked America, then on an unending honeymoon with Big Business; but it only registered in the American minds as a failing of what was *the best in the world*. The need for improving the best is seldom seen as critical.

Big Business was by now into inducing minor changes in lifestyle but of an entirely different nature from what youth had in mind. In the saturating consumer



products markets, Big Business was using psychological research to study the inner feelings of consumers, to create "wants", fears, which would then be satisfied by its new products.

It was in new product development that a certain amount of freedom was given to the new products team, in brainstorming and cutting corners — at least until the idea and concept were firmed up. Then the standard rituals applied; if it was a totally new product category, more freedom was permitted because there was no "historical data". There was another area of relative freedom — in the conducting and interpreting of qualitative research. Much of qualitative research was used for new product ideas, unusual copy strategies and to dig for "wants" in consumers; consumer needs were by now generally satisfied — except in areas in which it was impractical for a business corporation to try to do so.

Qualitative research was depth research, psychological rather than statistical in nature, intended to probe consumers to elicit information which the consumers may not consciously provide — they might either lie or be unaware of their real feelings.\* Sample sizes were usually much smaller than in quantitative research; in some techniques, aides were used; e.g., the tachometer was used to measure awareness of flashed messages that only barely registered on the conscious mind; the kaleidoscope, to measure imprint of packaging and sometimes for copy recall; remote cameras measured eye pupil dilation among consumers (dilation measured interest variations) usually for packaging and in-store displays and locations. Psychologists were sometimes employed to use the ink blot and similar techniques, for consumer grouping by characteristics, etc.

The bulk of depth research was, however, through extensive probing of individual respondents (sometimes two to three hours), or through the more popular "focus group" or "group sessions". In the former, an extensive questionnaire was designed usually with the aid of a specialist (psychologists who specialized in such marketing research); the corporate executive discussed the project with him or her, formulated the extensive questionnaire which was intended to extract a great deal of personal information, in addition to habits and usage of a particular product category (sometimes two or more to divert the consumer's awareness about which was of special interest); the objective was to learn a lot of the consumer's own desires and aspirations, lifestyle and attitudes in addition to all his or her habits with regard to the product category of interest; in essence, to know as much as possible about the consumer, without his or her knowing exactly what was being done.

All the information was taped by the highly trained interviewers, then replayed by the corporate and research specialists.

In the "focus group" a psychologist moderator conducted a more unstructured session with nine or ten specially selected respondents at a time, also for two to three hours with usually 15-20 such sessions per project; their selection and the sequence of topics would have been very carefully discussed through the corporation briefs; the respondents were told they had been invited there to help a freelance moderator learn about their preferences about a product category or an advertising campaign; the carefully directed "snowballing" of the conversation (this is where it departed from the "group therapy" format) was very intentional; expertise in control of those who

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\* Corporate and TV spokesmen always claimed in public that the American adult was too independent-minded to be influenced or coerced by TV. But in business, away from the public eye, the businessmen knew all too well by now how powerful TV's influence was, and that people lied, on some issues.



might dominate, and encouragement of those who were timid, the steering of the conversation to specific areas of probe without seeming to do so, were among the many subtle qualities that separated the good moderator from the poor one. The technique was extremely popular — and becoming more so by the year; New York alone had over fifty professional psychologist-moderators and some former corporate executives with a lot of experience were also moderators; some who specialized in specific types of groups e.g. young women, housewives, single men, children. Special groups were held with suitable adjustments for little children (e.g., the “smile”, “frown” cards) but all the different groups had one thing in common; a group of corporate and ad agency executives on the other side of a one-way mirror (if not available, a close-circuit TV). The respondents knew nothing about this — it was critical that they did not, in order that they may not be self-conscious, but more importantly, they might object strongly, especially when the subject-matter involved very personal topics, like women’s personal care habits, sex habits among women (the moderator for such sessions was of course a woman). The entire session would have been taped (the moderator explaining that it was for her own use) but it would be played back later several times at the corporation — along with the fifteen to twenty other such sessions that would normally be conducted in each such series on a topic.

*Corporate practices were highly vulnerable to public challenge, therefore; if youth, already aligned with consumer movements, stumbled on these it could be highly embarrassing.*

Then there was the waste, peculiar to the U.S. economy, through saturated markets with me-too products. The average American food store had carried 867 items in 1928; it carried 3,750 items by 1950; by 1964, it had 6,900. The larger — the super store — carried about 11,000 (*This Week Bicentennial Grocery and Drug Study*). In just ten categories of HBA (Health & Beauty Aids, such as shampoo, mouthwash, cold and headache remedies) there were 799 items in 1959; by 1964 there were 1,614 in the store.

There were 81 toothpaste brands in 1959; in 1964, there were 176; there were 115 shampoos in 1959, there were 236 in 1964; there were 90 deodorants in 1959, by 1964 there were 176; hair sprays had increased from 53 in 1959 to 259 in 1964.

Town-Oller Inc, in a national inventory, found 4,106 items in types of H&BA products, almost twice what they had been in 1959.

There were 70 types of breakfast cereals at any one time in a supermarket. Most contained up to 80% sugar and many had plastic toys to entice children (research, like the “focus group” was intended to determine preferences among kids, especially in cereals and candies, because in-store research showed that the kids usually could coerce mothers to buy); three manufacturers dominated the market, with almost 90% of market share. Cereal brands, like many impulse items, were on short marketing cycle, being replaced by others every so often.

New products were exploding. In 1963 there were 350 frozen food items, 189% more than in 1950; 145 paper products (toilet and facial tissues), 179% more than in 1950; 200 cake-baking mixes, 138% more.

When studies reflected this enormous increase, it was of course to glorify the progress. No doubt, in many categories, the proliferation had increased sales. But no one seemed to want to consider the economic waste. Individual corporations in the business of making money, had every right to try and garner as much as they could; fortunes were being spent on packaging, sales promotion gimmicks, and ever-increasing advertising budgets.

From the standpoint of each *individual* corporation, this made good sense. If a new product failed, there were the tax and other benefits (including experience) as we have seen. The excessive costs of packaging, advertising and promoting the many "me-too" products? *The consumer paid for it.*

Aggressive merchandising and promotion required fast, discounted wholesale prices to the trade; the supermarket and drug chains, very Big Business themselves now, could afford to reject items unless the mark-off was attractive enough. Generally, the wholesale of packaged goods price was about 33% of the final retail price to the consumer. The product cost in many instances to the major corporation would have been about 10-12% of the retail price; advertising could account for as little as 10% or as much as 50% depending on the product category. But because the major market control was by now mainly in the hands of a few major conglomerates (and growing more so by the year), by common agreement, they could maintain a high level of retail price; some chains had their own brands (sometimes manufactured for them by the giant corporations themselves during lean plant hours) which were cheaper, but the market competition between the giant corporations (despite their special individual promotions, cents-off offers, etc.) was a competition between those who wanted more of the market but were, at the same time, jealously guarding the price levels which benefitted them all. There was complacency and understanding therefore, towards lower priced competition from "store's-own" brands — in its own way, the lower priced "store's-own" brand kept outsiders (other small manufacturer's products) from coming in and taking a share. If, for instance, a small manufacturer had developed a better cereal, a toothpaste or a soap, and wished to sell it much cheaper in the store, the consumer trained by advertising would be concerned about the quality (if it's cheap, it cannot be good) but might still try it and like it; the "store's own" brand on the other hand could take in such price-conscious small segment, without worrying the giants too much about the extent of the share erosion. After all, "store's-own" brand sold in *only* those stores.

Not that a small manufacturer could ever hope to compete unless he was very, very lucky; he would have problems all along the way — the heavy costs of packaging and distribution, all Big Business now, which — even if not controlled by the giants through subsidiaries — charged more than ever.

And there was advertising. Advertising costs on TV had been rising an average of 12% each year; the giant corporations had "block contracts", special discounted advertising rates, first preference in the sale of time on the highest rated shows. And, most important of all, the advertising rates were much too high for a small entrepreneur — the top rated shows on the networks charged as much as \$50,000 a minute for advertising. This was to increase in future years by more than 600% (and no questions raised), but even without those shut-out rates, it was much too high for the small or moderate size business.

Just the top nine of the nation's 17,000 national advertisers accounted for 11% of all national advertising dollars spent. On an average, the top nine advertisers spent 93% of their advertising dollars on TV; the nation's largest advertiser was Proctor & Gamble (the company owned by Proctor, who, it will be recalled, supported President Harding); P&G at this point (mid 1960s) spent \$150,000,000 a year on advertising and this, we must always note, does not include the many hundreds of millions spent on sales promotion, public relations; it is only advertising expenditure through media. If the figures seem high, it might be noted that by 1985, P&G was spending close to \$1 billion a year in advertising, 93% on TV, on its soaps, detergents, toothpastes,



cake mixes, diapers, frozen foods, household cleaners etc. Its TV unit continued to produce many of the soap operas (daytime programs) on network TV.

It was no longer a market place for building a better mousetrap, unless it just happened to come along through a totally new idea, or as a natural development (as the computer chips did). The giants could not afford to take the chance to do so. And as for the small and moderate sized businesses, they simply could not afford to compete, even if they had a better mousetrap. Some, who had developed it, merely sold it to the giant. There were occasions when better mousetraps were bought and stored away. They would have disrupted the existing market.

In the process of probing the psyche of the American consumer, new techniques continued to be experimented with; market segmentation (the grouping of consumers by their characteristics) had been used. But now a new, highly sophisticated and highly expensive technique was developed called multivariate analyses. The analyses involved — the jargon must be used here — not just the standard factor and regression analyses, but the plotting of individual brands on an axis, using a multitude of different criteria, all gathered during the extensive consumer interviews, (with a very large sample), in which the questions asked included quantitative and qualitative measures. Semantic scales and psychographics were also used, so that not only was the overall image of a brand apparent, but that of signal words and phrases; consumer segments were analysed on many different ways, e.g. what were the characteristics of the people who found Brand X the best, what they found Brand Y lacked; conversely the characteristics of those who found something lacking in Brand X. The plotting of the imagery and the semantic scales, plus the battery of psychographical information obtained, provided a deeper insight into the consumers.

When used with skill, with a balanced judgment and mindful of pitfalls in going overboard, the technique worked, for some product categories, and especially for some new products\*.

*In its passion against the Vietnam War, when youth attacked Big Business and Materialism, and sought to change American values and lifestyle, it did not of course realize just what was involved, or how nervous it made Big Business.* Big Business simply could not afford an ongoing incisive look within the corporate operations, above all, it could not afford an inquiry so deep that at some point, the American public might be made aware that Big Business prosperity did not necessarily mean national prosperity, that in some ways the two were mutually exclusive.

There was now one aspect of creativity involved in Big Business practices which had not existed in past decades, and that was to put together all the masses of standardized data, and findings from all the in-depth research, then come up with an effective advertising strategy, a twist in the copy, a uniqueness in the campaign theme that would make it stand out from among its many competitors; an even greater challenge was to have the commercial remembered and the copy message communicated through the enormous clutter of ever-growing commercials on TV.

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\* Bod Haldeman, Nixon's longtime friend, aide, and former executive at J. Walter Thompson, apparently thought so, as no doubt did many of the other Nixon aides who were also former advertising executives.

A multivariate study was conducted for Richard Nixon in 1967; instead of brand names, the names of presidential candidates were used. It was of course highly confidential; but anyone who may have seen the study would have understood how perfectly the Nixon speech writers had subsequently been briefed, and how in his speeches around the country, he used the right words, and the right topics for the various "segments" of Americans, to make himself all things to all the people.



In some ways it was a greater challenge than the freewheeling idea-to-execution of the past eras. And in some cases it was very well done. What the public never recognized was that often the very appealing or amusing advertising campaign was not really the best campaign for the advertiser. By now, the inherent problems of a single-exposure TV testing method produced many frustrations to the marketer; soon however, split-cable testing was available, measuring — in select towns — the consumer behavior at the stores, in addition to reactions and recall of ad copy, over time. There were also mini-market set-ups, that worked in reflecting the real-life situation.

The really skilled giant conglomerates had campaigns that the public thought were boring, corny, even an "insult to the intelligence". But often this was exactly where the marketing skills of the professionals were one up on the public. Many campaigns, especially the "slice of life" variety, were *deliberately* made to forcefully communicate the most potent words and messages in copy, repetitive, with simplistic housewife-to-housewife situations; there were detergents, household cleaners, washing machines that jumped to the ceiling or talked back, a genie with a turban, cleansers that became tornadoes; ovens spoke with ethnic humor; a man in a white suit flew into suburban homes at all hours to solve great domestic quarrels with his plastic bags and a White Knight charged around on his horse through the backyards of suburbia, using his lance to turn hanging clothes to sparkling white, while adoring housewives watched. A brilliant twist was now to be added to detergent advertising by the word "bright" as the end-promise; "makes clothes not just white but bright"; no housewife in all the subsequent studies could explain what "bright" really meant in clothes, but it worked well enough to get all detergent makers to use "bright" instead of "white". A smart copywriter for Tide detergent came up with a slogan that continued to be used, because it was so effective: "Strongest Tide in detergent history". The words stayed within the rules simply saying that this was the best Tide; to consumers not really examining the words it would seem that Tide was the best of all detergents.

The White Knight campaign illustrates an important point of difference between what the consumers thought and how much more the marketer knew them. All studies showed that consumers were irritated, thought it was "an insult to their intelligence". But the story at the supermarket was entirely different. Sales rose by more than 30%; consciously the consumer laughed and scoffed at the campaign and its creators. But by so doing, his and her psychological barriers, the defences, *were down*. The campaign was stupid enough to be talked about and made fun of; the exaggerated message registered firmly on the unconscious. They bought the product at the store.

The more astute advertisers deliberately made their commercials a little foolish and corny for this reason. The public questioned the intelligence of the creators of the commercials, but most times, it worked for that reason. That is not, by any means, to suggest that all the poorly executed commercials were deliberately made so; but many were — and would continue to be, in future years, and sell very well.

On the other hand, some truly creative or dazzling campaigns over-reached themselves. The Alka Seltzer campaign became internationally known for its excellent copy and acting. Creatively, they were very well thought out and executed. The problem was they did not sell the product: people remembered them, talked about them; but the image communicated because they were really funny, was that of hang-over analgesic, not a serious one. It was too funny for a real-medicine image. In like manner, a much-touted Dodge car campaign with the very pretty Dodge girl

(later an actress) and a lot of special effects did not sell; it was too "busy", the pretty girl and the special effects were too distracting for consumers to remember the Dodge message.

Some of the "mood" campaigns, however, intended to create atmosphere and cumulative image, did very well; auto manufacturers were selling chic, status, not performance, except in passing; the German and Japanese cars were already functionally superior, but the general public was not aware as yet in large enough numbers. For their objectives, therefore, the auto "mood" commercials and those for the soft drinks did their job effectively (though Pepsi Cola's *Come Alive! You're In The Pepsi Generation* had soon to be replaced by *You've Got A Lot To Live And Pepsi's Got A Lot To Give* because the former sounded too much as if it was primarily targeted for the current youth generation).

There were examples of the unconsciously foolish and poorly executed national campaigns; among local retailers — especially auto dealerships in California — TV advertising had also become very popular primarily because one of them, Ralph Williams, used it a lot and profited greatly. The execution in such commercials did not need to be professional, and it was not. Ralph Williams appeared incessantly, morning, noon and night (and in the small hours) live, selling hard; "Hi, I'm Ralph Williams, the world's largest Ford dealer" he began and then went into his sales pitch and his specials for the day. Just about every major retailer in the U.S. claimed to be "the world's largest" but Williams with his many enormous lots in Ventura County, could well have been. He constantly tried an ingratiating smile but it never quite came off on his hardened salesman features. But TV was a lethal weapon for selling and the average American family watched it by now about 6 hours a day. He sold big. That naturally brought competition. Carl Worthington used his own gimmicks — he got himself hoisted up on a crane and began his forceful sell from the skies; he would then be lowered (carefully, it was all "live") to sell his daily specials from the ground. He had an enormous dog who was supposed to sit on the hood of every "special" that he sold; sometimes, however the dog took off, or commenced barking ferociously, causing havoc for Worthington and his TV crew in the "live" broadcast.

Others followed suit with their own gimmicks. One Ford dealer in Lynwood, California, a small mild-looking redheaded man, never ceased to surprise one, because after his sales pitch for the day (far less aggressively delivered than the others), he would stare deadpan at the camera in a close-up, then suddenly sign off with "the loneliest Lynwood Ford dealer" uttered in a prolonged wolf call crescendo, maintaining all the while the deadpan, sad expression. It was not a put-on.

But they all evidently sold; they used "spot" (local) advertising, so the rates were a fraction of national rates. But they swamped the air-waves with frequency, and stayed with it, so it must have paid off. The medium of TV was a lethal medium for selling. In an era of extreme chauvinism, national advertisers did *not* play up nationalism; they did not have to do so, except occasionally in institutional campaigns. The movies and TV series did it for them.

(iv)

Showbusiness, especially TV and the movies, was by now highly respectable. Showbusiness in America had initially been inextricably tied in with whoredom, burlesque, strip tease, the mob-controlled night clubs and vaudeville. The movies



suddenly made overnight "stars" of some showbiz aspirants, yet they were, for the most part, distant from the "legitimate" theater. The Hoover-Roosevelt "national revival" morale campaigns first made respectable claims on Movieland, though in many ways, that marriage between Washington and Hollywood was to lead the nation into an obsession with fantasy from which it never recovered. World War 2 made Hollywood actors "legit" again by using them to entertain troops, again boost national morale, through the countless patriotic and anti-Nazi movies. Actors, of course, did not want to go to the actual war fronts, so they fought furiously to become national heroes on The Silver Screen, The Hollywood Canteen, or troop entertainment. It was excellent PR for the stars.

After the war, the status of the movie actors and actresses had therefore changed. Some of the now, middle-aged actors, had as young men begun in the music halls, in burlesque, had known dire poverty as they persevered. In the furious competitive showbiz world it was necessary to start young, so no matter what claims they might later make, they were usually very poorly educated. Even those who may have had some college in a small town before embarking on their showbiz dreams had spent most of these formative years more in the pursuit of developing some showbiz experience than in formal education; in search of fame, they had lived among deadbeats and in the burlesque circuit. Some would later admit — while others would not — of having been street side peddlers, con artists, using "skills" (plants), to cheat "marks" (suckers) with their "gaff" (sales pitch). With money and fame, not only had all this changed, but in the respectable aura that the NRA campaign and then the War effort had placed them, they were now the elite of American society. In the Eisenhower-Nixon years, many of the middle-aged actors had become conveniently "Republican" whereas they had, as the struggling and poor aspirants been fully behind the Roosevelt New Deal (that also helped being on the right side when Roosevelt was a very popular President). No doubt some — perhaps all — never thought of themselves as opportunists. Their profession was not one for moral introspection.

Now they were rich, some were even guests at the White House, sought eagerly to be of the Nixon-McCarthy anti-communist drive, equating every intellectual in Hollywood with communism. By the 1960s, these aging movie actors were important, solid, "conservative" Republican party members, very active — and very useful — in political campaigns. When they appeared on TV, either on talk shows or as "special guest stars", they were as gods who had been kind enough to come to earth among the lower beings — though they always behaved as if they were still so unassuming they did not mind being with the ordinary people; one was made aware, however, that their rightful place was among Presidents. Many of them had made very big money, having bought into major conglomerates, and vast counties of choice real estate.

Movies and TV reflected the elite social status of movie stars and corporate executives. In movie scripts, the rich American (Rock Hudson or a lookalike) when in Europe, might have many admirers, but he usually ended up with a Princess or a movie star, for serious romance. And the "commies" were the boorish uncouth ruffians, in every way. A case in point was a successful 1961 movie called *One, Two Three* starring James Cagney; Cagney is a senior Coca Cola executive in Germany and has not only to support various Germans (including a German nobleman) with Coca Cola business, Cagney has also to rescue the debutante daughter of a Coca Cola executive, who has come from Georgia and has been trapped into an infatuation by a wild, grubby young East German communist; Cagney goodheartedly tries to teach



the uncouth East German how to dress and eat like a gentleman. In the process, the script makes it clear that "(Senator) Stevenson Democrats" do not stand for Democracy and The American Way, but Coca Cola does and that "Africa for the Africans" is a ludicrous idea; that West German police can be bribed with a six-pack of Coca Cola and the East Germans with blondes.

There were war movies in which Americans did fantastic deeds; the spy movies (James Bond and variations) were big, as were Westerns, with the "folk" now more gentlemanly and ladylike than ever, who lived in homes (with chandeliers and panelled libraries) but who were brave enough to fight the barbaric murderous Indians, when necessary. There were the obligatory Arab films, of sheikhs and dancing girls, and Middle East filth. An occasional variation now involved a young Arab Prince, educated in the U.S., whom a band of his people (led by a villain, usually a Prime Minister) were trying to kill along with his father because he wanted to bring his kingdom into the 20th Century, to have The American Way of Life. With the aid of American agents, the young Prince usually succeeded; sometimes the Arab Prince went too far — he would want to take an American beauty to be his queen; even she might agree, until she realized that the barbarian only wants to add her to his harem of other wives.

The suburban comedies almost always had homes of remarkable splendor belonging to a corporate or ad agency executive. Even the lowly secretary had a huge East Side two, sometimes, three bedroom apartment. And the streets of New York looked as if you could have eaten your dinner off them.

And then there was TV programming. It followed the standard formulae of the 1950s, only more so; there was more "upper class" added, in decor, in self-awareness. In the long-running *Hogan's Heroes*, Colonel Hogan and a band of American POWs (with one British cockney and one little Frenchman) are prisoners-of-War at Stalag 13 in Germany, but they are prisoners *by choice*; so fantastic is their resourcefulness, that they can come and go as they please; through the series, Hogan and his heroes take care of all the major Allied victories — from French resistance successes to Allied bombings to frustrating all Hitler's plans. Young America, learning from this about the War may have wondered what the rest of the Allies were really doing.

Soap operas were more popular than ever; game shows were coming into their own after the 1959 payola scandals; now the garish show hosts frequently chose to make more than a few chauvinistic remarks about American superiority, in apparent imitation of Groucho Marx. Groucho Marx had the very successful *You Bet Your Life* game show in which every time there was any foreign contestant (and they appeared to select one every few days), he would joke, during the introductions, about their names, their country, their accent, to the huge delight of his audience (of the shows monitored, only one, a British woman Ph.D, who was in the U.S. as a cook, stood up to his ridicule with a couple of repartees of her own).

In the very successful *Patty Duke Show*, Patty has a lookalike English cousin (also played by her) who is in the U.S. to study and lives with Patty's family. She (the English cousin) is intelligent, fond of classics and Shakespeare; she is therefore very dull and withdrawn and boys do not take to her, even with Patty's help. In one episode, Patty had even to help a dull Swedish visitor learn how to be liked by boys.

Something else was surfacing in this highly chauvinistic era. That was the theme in some of the most popular series that Americans were often descended from the British aristocracy. It occurred in Westerns, and it occurred even in the top comedies. *The Honeymooners* where Ralph Cramdon, the bus driver finds, after all these

years, that he is the grandson of an Irish squire, complete with a manor in the Old Country; and in the other top rated show *Beverly Hillbillies* (in which the mountain family, suddenly rich has been shocking elite Beverly Hills with its nouveau riche behavior), now finds that they are the direct descendants of a noble English family; they inherit a peerage, a castle and a platoon of servants.

There were the "gee whiz" situation comedies, like *Ozzie & Harriet* and *Father Knows Best* in which the father is constantly around, and no one really can tell what he does for a living — aside from solving family problems (such as when the son wants a bike, and the daughter is sick before the school prom). The very well written and acted *Dick Van Dyke Show* managed, however, through more than one episode to emphasize how important a job is — even the talented hero has to beg to come back. And the trio of TV writers (the show is mainly about them) come up with the scripts through brilliant brain-storming sessions — not a single researcher around all through the years.

There were a rash of talk shows — ranging from the frankly racist and "controversial" Joe Pyne (white) to Louis Lomax (black). Spectator fights in the audiences were not uncommon.

But the center stage of talk show hosts was already the talented Johnny Carson, who had replaced the multitalented Steve Allen and Jack Paar as host of *The Tonight Show* in 1962. One incident during *The Tonight Show* in 1964 perhaps best reflects the mood of America (this show was then and is today, the highest rated late night show in the U.S.).

Johnny Carson, in his monologue, was apt to make some jokes about foreign countries or foreigners (though usually with less venom than others). One night he indulged in stronger-than-usual jokes about France's DeGaulle. Next day, French diplomats in the U.S. lodged a protest. In a statement published in the New York Times, a French Embassy official remarked that when American entertainers do not know how to make people laugh, they make jokes about foreign leaders such as General DeGaulle. That night, *The Tonight Show* had a comic impersonator (Robert Mandon) appear on the show, pretending to be a French official come to lodge a protest. In that capacity, he made a few ridiculous remarks. Then Carson responded by taking a bowl of cream, (kept there for the purpose) and poured it over Mandon's head, with the words: "The case is closed". The audience laughed and applauded hysterically for minutes.

There is no doubt that most — if not all — countries indulge in some degree of chauvinism, especially through their own commercial media. There was, in many ways, a lot in America's recent history to be proud of; the meteoric rise to leadership of the world, the gigantic business empires, the riches that attracted the talented and the industrious, the inventions and the showbiz glamor. The speed with which America had reached the top as a nation was unprecedented.

On the other hand, it was the New World, whose deliberate and expressed founding principle was to seek to learn the good, discard the corrupt from the Old World.

In the intoxication generated by such lightening success, history's formula for excessive chauvinism was never heard, or allowed to be voiced. Any attempt made to communicate it was firmly rejected, in disbelief. Unlike other countries, American media was all-consuming. It enveloped Americans all through their waking hours; the average American was pounded with 1,700 advertising messages a day, through various media, all wrapped around entertainment that was intended to make the



consumer feel good and glorious, all intended to flatter, so he or she would buy, buy, buy.

(v)

Americans at home were almost entirely unaware of the continuing pressures to turn European TV and radio to commercial or to the reactions in developing countries to American movies and TV. A few remarkably principled Americans — in an age when it was not fashionable to be so — wrote about it, but to very select audiences. Professor Skornia was one of them. In "Television and Society" (1965) he provides some examples of the type of pressure used by American Big Business to commercialize TV and radio in Europe. "It would be a mistake" he writes "to believe that only United States advertising agencies were involved. Equally involved were United States equipment manufacturers, film companies, TV networks and the trade press". There were obvious reasons for this. By now networks themselves owned many of these other businesses, and other big U.S. corporations, with the great success they had achieved in the U.S. with commercial TV and radio, were very keen too.

One form of pressure used upon Europeans was the threat on the host country, of broadcasts at local audiences from "pirate ships" off the coast of England, Scotland, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Holland, Denmark, Belgium, and other countries (Britain had already accepted partial commercial TV). Prof. Skornia lists some of these "pirate" stations — Radio Mercur (or Merkur), with solid earnings from American corporations' (advertising) commercials, followed by Radio Nord (North), Radio Syn (South), Radio Veronica, Radio Atlanta, Radio Caroline, etc., and finally by late 1963 or early 1964, various television transmitters on ships and artificial islands outside the territorial waters of Holland, the British Isles, Norway and Sweden. "These were outlawed in 1965" writes Prof. Skornia mainly from action taken by the Swedish Government followed by the governments of Denmark, Finland, and Norway.

Prof. Skornia also traces the ownership of these "pirate radio stations" directly to American ownership. In the case of Radio Nord, for instance, he quotes a report from *The New York Times* (April 2, 1961) of an interview with the owner of the "Nord Establishments", a Mr Robert F. Thompson of Dallas, Texas. Asked if he was aware *The Bonjour* was broadcasting commercial radio into Sweden (which forbade it), Mr Thompson replied: "I ought to know. I own her".

Most of Europe, even when it did go commercial, kept more control on TV broadcasting than the U.S. had. In Europe, TV was restricted in time to no more than ten hours a day. Commercials were often restricted to some programs only, advertising on children's programs were strictly controlled, and advertisers could not specify where their advertising was to appear in a program — or in some, not even which program it would appear in. In the U.S. of course (at that time) not only could advertisers specify the specific location of each commercial, but could sponsor the program, which was often named after the advertiser, and the stars repeated the sponsor's name and that of his products, sang his jingle and often plugged his products in the program itself.

In the "developing" countries, where American commercial TV and movies were usually welcomed, there were even greater problems, though not apparent at the start. That was the nature of the programming. More often than not, it annoyed local



citizenry with its blatant distortions and ridicule; at other times, the sheer mediocrity of the programming gave the worst image of America to the foreign audiences.

Concern with the nature of U.S. programming had grown among intellectuals in the U.S. but there were just a few individuals who spoke out of the dangers, were concerned, not only with the spreading control of U.S. commercial TV power abroad but the kind of programming that came to be exported. Prof. Skornia, himself a former President of the National Association of Educational Broadcasters, was one who voiced his concern repeatedly, especially at the ridicule, distortion and stereotyping. "Certainly no race is more consistently debased and slandered in the United States mass media than the Negroes" he wrote. "That is costing us dearly abroad. Mexicans see themselves portrayed as lazy, shiftless characters, mispronouncing English and speaking through bad teeth with a foolish smile. The Italian, seeking his image, all too often finds it in stereotyped criminal gangsters".

Dr. Chisholm in *Prescription for Survival* (1957) asked what the American Indian was expected to see in those highly popular Westerns in which so many had made their fortunes, Westerns with "great Indian killers, whose only virtue was that they killed large numbers of Indians, Indians who were most wickedly trying to defend their homes and their wives and their children, and their right to their own country...". Dr. Brock Chisholm, a Canadian was Director-General of World Health Organization and later President of the World Federation of Mental Health. In the Brampton Lectures at Columbia University, he asked as a citizen of Africa would ask, "why Americans allow these media excesses to happen, because those films do more harm than a hundred Voices of America could do good. They completely, or more than completely, neutralize much of the true educational work that is being done about North America in our part of the world... The only answer apparently is to make money so badly that it would blacken its own reputation in the eyes of hundreds of millions of people to earn a few dollars".

Canada, while in many ways by now a U.S. satellite, resisted attempts to be made an extension of U.S. media. The Royal Canadian Commission on Broadcasting observed in 1957 "In a troubled and difficult world, Canada has a role to play... assuming that their [U.S.] broadcasting system is satisfactory and suitable for Americans, this is no basis for thinking it is desirable for Canadians". And in Britain, there was still considerable opposition to the growing power of commercial TV. In *Birth of Broadcasting* (1961), Asa Briggs advised that U.S. broadcasting methods should "serve as a warning rather than an example".

Ridicule and distortions of developing countries were leading to encouragement, rather than the control of, communism. Increasingly, the developing nations turned to communist countries for educational material. "It is a great tragedy to thus contribute to their [developing countries] demand for Soviet, Yugoslav, Czech, and even Red Chinese educational materials. It is a bitter irony indeed, that those allegedly profiting most from the American media, contribute most of its undoing". wrote Prof. Skornia.

In an address at a Dupont Awards Foundation dinner at New York, March 25, 1962, Sir Hugh Green, Director-General of BBC, said with remarkable frankness for a visiting dignitary "The leadership of the Western World is today in American hands ... One cannot help wondering whether the good that has been done by program after program of foreign aid is in danger of being undone by the image of America as it appears ... on the television screens of the world ... In countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, there are thousands of young idealistic people who want more from

television than the ideals of Tombstone and Dead Man's Gulch... If I have said more than is becoming of a guest, I can only plead that frankness may be excused among friends".

Edward R. Murrow, the distinguished journalist, had spoken out of his concerns; although employed at CBS he had the status — and the integrity — to criticize. In 1958 in New York, he told the Radio and Television News Directors' Association "I cannot believe that radio and television or the corporations that finance the programs are serving well or truly their viewers or listeners or themselves. The top management of the networks, with a few notable exceptions, has been trained in advertising, research, sales or show business... But by the nature of the corporate structure, they also make the final and crucial decisions having to do with news and public affairs... I can find nothing in the Bill of Rights which says that they [the TV bosses] must increase their net profits each year, lest the republic collapse... unless we get up off our fat surpluses and recognize that television in the main is being used to detract, delude, amuse and insulate us, then television and those who finance it, those who look at it and those who work at it, may see a totally different picture too late... *the responsibility can be easily placed in spite of all the mouthings about giving the public what it wants. It rests on Big Business, and on Big Television and it rests at the top*".

Some years later — in April 1962 — addressing the National Association of Broadcasters, Edward R. Murrow said, "I suggest you would do well to acknowledge that in the volatile world in which we live, celluloid and magnetic tape are the strategic commodity. Those who do export of it must show concern and consideration for its use. I have doubt that what is being said abroad [by U.S. media] about the people of this land is in accord with what the people of this land would have spoken in their name... not everything done abroad is perpetuated in the national interest".

## *Turbulence: Youth and Nixon*

(i)

The Civil Rights movement, headed by Martin Luther King Jr., had gained considerable support from liberal whites under John and Robert Kennedy's direction; the Federal government marshalls had entered black students into Little Rock, Arkansas and Mobile, Alabama universities against fierce local resistance, (Governor George Wallace of Alabama had actually stood physically to block the entry) had received nationwide coverage and won more sympathetic hearts. The 1963 March on Washington had included both whites and colored minorites (for the most part, the American Indian issues were still frozen in the background). Martin Luther King, a Baptist Minister, was a proponent of "non-violent resistance" (he was greatly influenced by India's Mahatma Gandhi, he said) and had made great strides in the black cause. Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, in 1964, King denounced the Vietnam War, causing him to be looked upon by FBI's J. Edgar Hoover as a dangerous enemy of the U.S. and Senate investigations, many years later, were to disclose that the FBI actively sought to discredit him with questionable tactics among the American populace. In the meanwhile, the growing "Black Muslim" group (a kind of adaptation derived from the Muslim religion) was also considered dangerously radical by the police and the FBI. The murder of Malcolm X (who had converted to basic Islam after visiting Mecca) had been reported as being caused by hostile Black Muslims, but blacks did not believe that.

Ferment in the black communities was on the increase by the mid 1960s. Impatient with King's passive tactics, many ad hoc groups sought to take a more violent stance. There were uprisings, skirmishes, even battles with the police in riots across the country. These were to take on epidemic proportions when, in 1967, King was assassinated. More than 23 major metropolitan areas saw violent riots, burning and looting.

At first, the Establishment was convinced that the black rebellion could soon be controlled. But as militants formed groups like the Black Panthers and promised that "streets would flow with honkey blood" fear, even hysteria, took hold. The nation-wide rioting, burning and looting that followed created panic and terror. Lightning plans went into effect to placate and bring blacks into the mainstream. Major corporations accelerated plans for training programs for blacks, even as bullet-proof glass was installed on the outer structures of corporate skyscrapers.

The panic-stricken TV industry made a dramatic somersault. Hitherto, blacks were portrayed as slovenly or as devoted domestics (the blacks now called these the Uncle Tom and Aunt Jemima stereotypes) though occasional news broadcasts had been sympathetic towards the blacks as a race. But now, TV programs were quickly



rewritten. Talk shows on TV now suddenly stressed how the blacks had been victimized and programs now began to show blacks as the epitome of excellence. Concurrently, TV and corporate advertisers were measuring data, most for the first time, on the blacks as consumers. Predictably, it was found that in most consumer product categories, blacks often bought the premium brands as a status symbol even more than whites and could be even more easily influenced to buy if the programming or advertising seemed to be in sympathy with the black cause. Also, blacks watched even more TV than white America did.

Nevertheless, within most corporations, the change came slowly. Feelings were so deep that despite the lure of extra profits, corporations generally feared the image problem for their products if their advertising either depicted blacks in the commercials or seemed in sympathy with them, especially when so many blacks were advocating violent overthrow. Commercial TV felt no such restraints. It was a typical situation where the direct interests of media did not coincide completely with those of the advertising corporations. For its own benefits, TV not only had an image to maintain, but TV was quick to realize that the accusations of extreme bias were so easy to prove against it. TV was "up front" twenty four hours a day. The galloping profits that TV had enjoyed were too lucrative to take a chance with — especially if it could invite physical destruction.

And so, the TV networks went from one extreme to the other. In TV programming, from this point on, there was no such thing as a black "dummy" or villain. If there ever was, the script laboriously explained that it was through extreme bad luck, exploitation and rotten environment. Soon, blacks on TV dressed better, talked better and were always "with it" and "together". Programs with black-white buddies (such as *I Spy*) were to grow into an epidemic. Talk shows incessantly discussed the evils done to blacks and that the black man's woe was the white man's crime. Even in the industry's own interest it was too extreme because this somersault irked many whites. But TV's reaction was one of terror, a fast decision and not carefully planned as other policy decisions were.

It was all, of course, in the right direction for blacks appeasement — except that it was vastly overdone, which was not in the eventual interests of blacks. Commercial TV's interests were with mollifying black audiences and as usual, it went to extremes. Over the next few years, responsible blacks attempted to hold on to better values; but black youth watched TV and it soon conditioned them not only to expect more than they could reasonably hope, but to feel, in identifying with the new black TV characters, that they were superior as they were, and had only been denied the opportunity. *Like the whites, those blacks most impressed with TV were the ones most in need of self-improvement.* It was to lead to extreme self-righteousness, a dangerous trait for the blacks themselves, especially the poorly educated. Doors hitherto closed were to open to blacks soon. Some took advantage, studied, made headway. But many of the black youth, plunged into self-righteousness, self-pity, and anger, were to hasten self-destruction — turning to crime, drugs with at least a subconscious belief that in view of the past sufferings of their ancestors, every reaction was now justifiable. Understanding and concerned black leaders like Rev. Jessie Jackson were to try to keep reality in focus among the black masses, despite TV's excesses. In fact, developing countries could have learnt much from the responsible way a few black leaders were working to eradicate the evils of the black inferiority complex. But in the U.S. now, these responsible black leaders were faced with a new T.V. policy that was as hazardous as the previous one.

An unpleasant (therefore unpopular) point seldom recognized in emotionalism by victimized groups — whether within a country or belonging to a colonized country — is that, if the prejudice and discrimination has been real, then the victimized group, at the time of being set free, is *not* equal to the exploiters, even though they may have the *potential* to be equal or even superior. If the exploitation has worked, then opportunities have been denied to obtain the education, the experience and the perception. In the U.S., blacks had another grave disadvantage, seldom if ever recognized by them. Saddled with a deep inferiority complex, vis-a-vis American whites, the ultimate objective in life was to be like the American whites, to yearn for what whites yearned for; in this milieu, extreme materialism was injected into the American blacks even before they were set free. Despite the later claims to "Soul", it was all that most of them had ever been exposed to. Even Whitney Young, the Director of NAACP, then the leading black organisation, had proclaimed, "It is better to say 'I am rich' than to say 'I am poor'". Expecting material windfalls, yearning as always for all the goodies that TV lured them with day after day, segments of black youth were to resort to crime.

The rising crime rate, however, was not all due to this of course. Whites were similarly goaded for the "good things", and even as crime rates stepped higher by the year, it was black and white crime. In fact historically, America had always had crime far more than any country in the World\* — New York alone for years had had more crime than most European countries. TV would often claim that crime was a recent (i.e. ethnic) problem in the U.S. This was simply not true.

## (ii)

But if TV's switch with regard to the blacks was dramatic, its subsequent leap into the youth cause was even more dramatic and hilarious. It was TV which had principally molded the older American generation into its current form, the value system that youth criticized so fiercely. Yet now it was TV that made the somersault to claim sympathy for youth values, and even claim, explicately at times, that it had felt in sympathy with such values all along. And such was the magic power of the medium, that in years to come, TV was to be associated with a "liberal" image. With poetic justice, however, this enforced and artificial claim to liberalism was to boomerang and cause TV some anxious periods as it sought later to reshuffle its image problems.

Youth idealism had taken root among some segments for some years before it was noticed by media. From the early 1960s intellectual bands of youth had taken to questioning values and trends in American society. At first it was no more than an extension of the beatnik movement of the previous generation. But more American young were far better educated than their parent generation. They had more affluence, more time to think, at least some had the opportunity to look beyond the "plastic" values of their parents. It was, however, not a major movement, and might never have been had not several factors combined to make it so.

\* In 1930, reported murders in the U.S. were 12,473 a rate of 12.4 per every 100,000 population. The rate had always remained very high, except during World War II when it came down to approx. 8.0 per 100,000 population. At every stage for every one murder in Britain, there were as many as 150-200 in the U.S.



Media first noticed them as "hippies", a new generation of "beatniks", with even more extremism in their personal appearance than their predecessors. The original hippies — the more serious ones — wore shabby old clothes, unkempt hair and the men wore beards as a protest against a society obsessed with material desires, but to media they were a source of considerable merriment, and all media coverage was restricted to the bizarre appearance and the more freaked-out individuals among them.

The black cause was to provide added fire and legitimacy to some segments of the youth movement. At the other extreme, the movement was to provide the more irresponsible juvenile delinquents the freedom and legitimacy of extremism — the "hippie" movement was to typify this lunatic fringe. But generally, there could be said to have been three factors that were mainly responsible for making the movement into a national phenomenon, while it lasted.

One was the "generation gap", though in fact it was much more than that. It was a phenomenon especially peculiar to America, with its sudden leap in prosperity in recent times. There was a growing frustration and discontent among youth, a wide gap in communication between the more educated children and their parents. Many of the young had the opportunity and — with education — the inclination to think, something that their parents had not had. The parents had learnt of the world, of themselves and what they should or should not want, from television and other mass media. The young had too, but their education and economic prosperity gave them more vision. The second reason was the influence, emotionally very strong and very powerful, of the British youth rebellion spearheaded by the Beatles. Europe was undergoing an upheaval of social structures since World War II. Now there had burst on the English scene, not just a movement to spring the lower class youth into mainstream, but a form of updated existentialism. The third reason for the universal appeal of the youth movement in America was perhaps the strongest for the youth mass — there were a lot of Americans now dying in Vietnam. Many of the young, to whom the movement would otherwise have meant little, saw a lot of real meaning in "make love, not war". The young men did not want to go and die there. And the young women did not want their brothers, friends and mates to die there.

And soon, of course, with Nixon in the White House, doing all that he was doing, intellectuals and liberals were to find expression in that movement too.

Virtually all of the youth movement were opposed to Nixon, though some in a bitter backlash felt the country would deserve to get exploited by Nixon. Despite such cynicism, it was generally felt by the movement, that the Democratic nominee — probably Vice-President Hubert Humphrey — would be the next President. A massive anti-War demonstration was planned outside the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. As the news of the demonstration spread through media, Chicago's Mayor Daly (the old-time Democratic "Boss" of the area) warned that the police would be instructed to put down any violence in Chicago or interference in the Convention. The intention of the demonstrating leadership — and the vast majority of the participants, young and old — was to show strength and ensure that the Convention wrote in a strong anti-Vietnam War resolution into the Democratic platform. But among the demonstrators were the wild and irresponsible too. The Yippies for instance, a new sub-group (headed by Jerry Rubin), clearly included many who were merely thrill-seekers and headline hunters. The police, on their part, acted with even greater irresponsibility. Their attack on the crowds was viciously brutal. At the Convention, the TV cameras moved off the Convention floors to give wide



coverage and close-ups of the brutal indiscriminate beatings of the demonstrators outside. Inside the Convention Hall, word of the fighting and police actions spread; there were violent arguments and physical battles between those who sided with the demonstrators, those with the police, and those who felt media was provoking the whole situation by its extensive coverage for sensationalism. Through the chaos, all seen on TV, Humphrey was nominated.

It was clear in the weeks ahead that youth and large segments of the public who had watched the unprecedented melee on TV, were going to hold Humphrey responsible since Mayor Daly was a Humphrey supporter. Humphrey himself, who combined what might be called a perpetual verbal diarrhoea with an astute political ability to hold important segments of the electorate (such as Labor and the Jewish Vote), was at heart a sincere and dedicated public servant. He was, during the late 1940s, when it was highly unpopular, a leading civil rights advocate for the blacks. Yet now, he was clearly viewed as Johnson's "Establishment". Humphrey, with typical principles, refused to speak out against the War in Vietnam, because he was still Johnson's VP. Eugene McCarthy, the youth candidate, on the other hand, who had lost the Democratic nomination, refused to publicly endorse his old-time friend (both he and Humphrey were from Minnesota), despite many overtures by Humphrey. Nixon benefited greatly from this friction in the opposition Democratic party, and decided to stay as much out of the public eye as possible — his advisers felt that he could easily make a mistake so big that anti-Humphrey feelings would vanish. Humphrey wanted public and TV debates with Nixon. Nixon refused.

Media kept the Chicago chaos alive. Network TV strategists and youth supporters now felt they had justifiable reasons to sensationalize. There were repeat showings of the police brutality, talk shows discussing the actions, psychologists opinions, more talk shows, newsmen and newswomen voicing their own anger at the treatment of the press and the demonstrators.

In spite of it all, Humphrey began to regain support as November approached. Shortly before the elections, polls showed that Humphrey had returned strongly to be within a few percentage points of Nixon. Nixon's campaign planners and image merchants began their own controlled "free debates" to show that Nixon was not afraid of public questioning, was not in "hiding". Nevertheless, Nixon refused to debate Humphrey. But he continued his main claim — that he had a "secret" formula to end the Vietnam War.\*

About a week or so before the elections, Eugene McCarthy was finally persuaded to endorse Humphrey. He did it, but with obvious — and very apparent — reluctance. It was too late, and not strong enough. In November, Richard Milhouse Nixon was elected by one of the narrowest margins in history. Nixon got 43.4% of the votes, Humphrey 42.7%, while "Independent" George Wallace (the Southern anti-black anti-youth extremist) got a significant 13.5% (or nearly ten million votes).

The dissipation of the liberal vote caused by McCarthy was to be the first in a series of such dissipations in future U.S. elections; and then, curiously, in Britain too.

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\* Nixon had claimed in the 1960 election campaign, it will be recalled, another "secret formula" which his fellow-Republican, Nelson Rockefeller, had challenged.

## (iii)

The youth movement had gained considerable public sympathy after the North Vietnamese Tet offensive in 1967 that killed many Americans, and again after the Chicago horrors. Network TV and major print media, even the nation's most "trusted" TV News Star, Walter Cronkite, now slowly changed sides to become anti-war.

The U.S. had always been a youth-worshipping country; advertising and commercial media played so great a role in individual lives, and youth was always both a powerful target market and a source of glamorous advertising appeal to the older segments of the public. But now there was something more. The New Morality and its attendant culture had a special quality of sophistication and intellectualism about it. Not to agree with reasoned arguments made the older people seem boorish. It was one thing to have foreigners criticize American materialism — that could be censored away or pigeon-holed as foreign jealousy. This was in the home.

On a personal level of course, it was particularly difficult, especially for those who were executives in Big Business or with the military. There were a few who genuinely felt the new Values Movement was a good thing. There was some who objected mainly to the sexual freedoms, for truly religious reasons. Among the younger corporate executives — and those who wanted to identify with the young — there was trauma. As we have seen earlier, they had become used to the mundane drudgery of their daily existence, convinced that it was more than compensated by the material benefits. Now under the onslaught of the youth movement, their values were being questioned, ridiculed, and they fiercely resented it. Many found a happy compromise; they chose to keep their material values, but claimed to be sympathetic to the new values.

Older corporate executives shared with other parents the more painful traumas. In many ways, for the parents' generation, it was tragically hard.

All *their* lives, from their own youth, media had told them what they themselves had rather liked to hear — that Materialism was the American Dream, it was what America was all about, it was Apple Pie. Now their kids were saying this was provincial and base. Since the post World War 2 mockery by Europeans at American flashy ties, jackets and Hawaiian shirts, the parent generation had been striving to create a new image of sober dressing. Now, not only were their own children splashing colors in clothes but those very Europeans did too, young and old. War was to the parents a deep sentimental emotion, going "over there" to make the work "safe for democracy", accompanied by Hollywood movies and patriotic songs and Bob Hope. Now the kids hated war. The parents had worked, "broken their backs" day and night, to get themselves and their children out of rags and slums into good clothes and decent suburbs. Now the kids *chose* to wear rags, and often head for the tenements in Height-Ashbury or Greenwich Village. And they scoffed at their parents' achievement, their "corporate executive" status and wealth. Movies, TV, even the spy novels, the romances, the sex novels, everything had told the parents that as Americans they represented the most sophisticated and advanced species the world knew or had ever known. They were "mighty proud" of their modern living, the best in the world, their healthy openness in sexual matters, the jokes, the manliness of chasing all goodlooking "dames", the drinking, the urbanity and the maturity with which they approached sex matters. Now some kids were saying the parents were full of hang-ups, sick dirty jokes, and had made sex ugly. Sex should be without hangups,

said the kids, free to be had whenever and with whomever one pleased. For these boys and girls, going all the way was the only way. And they talked of cultural subjects. They were against liquor but for marijuana. And soon, in increasing numbers, they were experimenting with LSD. Tobacco, they said, was a known killer like alcohol and Big Business had brainwashed people to accept that, but marijuana had not been proven harmful. The more daring experimented with LSD; that hallucinatory drug had suddenly become a fad among the San Francisco 'flower children'. It had by now reached all states, greatly symbolic to some of the Revolt, under the Leary Cult — Dr. Timothy Leary, Professor (soon ex-professor) of Harvard University was now its advocate in the growing infusion of psychedelic sights and sounds into a new sensate dimension. After all, New Morality was a form of existentialism; it believed in the rights of self (space), in the rejection of artificial restraints against self ("do it") as long as you did not harm others or interfere in their "space"; to be honest and caring ("let it all hang out") with no prejudices by race or sex or religion, to love all nature and respect it, as part of ourselves in the evolution of a joyous cosmology.

Not many went this distance at first, except on the two coasts. Fragile idealism of youth was genuinely seeking answers. They knew as they examined the values around them that at least some "traditional values" were dangerously immoral. They knew instinctively that the answers lay in a return to real morality, truth justice and love without prejudice. But what and how changes could be made they did not know and as time went, and frustrations grew, escapism into hard drugs was the answer for some. Wild and indiscriminate sexual experiments were another escape with the powerful rational of "make love, not war", but even to many in youth leadership, hallucinatory drugs provided another subconscious rationale; seeking solutions in a new dimension, in a hitherto unexplored mental prescription. There were others among youth leadership of course who remained sober, intelligent, angry and frustrated. On the other hand, there were many, who simply sought self aggrandisement, juvenile style.

Hitherto, the Power Structure had consisted of giant monoliths who banded together occasionally but at other times were quite competitive. In the extreme danger of this new movement, they saw real danger and they became, in effect, a Power Cartel.

All the various highly skilled techniques of consumer research were quickly put into operation to understand this whole movement. Additionally, younger executives were delegated and assigned in confidential projects to study the movement from within. In the meanwhile, advertising campaigns, especially those targeted towards youth, were reviewed to ensure that at least the basic known concerns of youth were not infringed — even if they were not upheld. Manufacturing corporations needed to make swift changes but it takes time to plan massive studies, reorganization, employment of youth-oriented executives.

So the major corporations wanted to play it safe; when it came to records and jeans and movies, obviously some extra show of support for youth values was necessary but even so after many years of success, there was great confidence in the eventual outcome. In the meanwhile, the young had to buy coke and records and jeans anyway.

What caused it all to become more serious and frightening was commercial TV's increasing and excessive praise for youth leadership, especially after the Democratic convention in Chicago. To many in the Power Cartel, it was duplicity dictated by self-interest. Others saw it as well meant but hysterical. All saw the results as



frightening. Because once the power of TV was added to publicizing and glamorizing the youth revolt, many hundreds of thousands of youth across the country quickly jumped on the band wagon, especially because they shared the primary concern — the draft to the war in Vietnam. Those masses of youth in Televisionland did not really need to know what New Morality was all about, only buzz words, catch phrases, generated by TV one day, which became clichés across the country the very next day. What millions of the young understood was that the new movement was against Americans being sent to Vietnam, and it was for free sex and enjoyment. What's more, adherence to the New Movement somehow seemed to make one seem intellectual. What more could a young person want?

Unlike other Big Businesses, for the TV networks themselves, a fast decision had become imminent. The very nature of the vast network TV empires required clear policy decisions. Propaganda had been an essential part of commercial programming — against World War 2 enemies, against communism, against Arabs; pro-Big Business, military, Apple Pie, Israel, and all major Institutions. Each network employed many thousands spread around the country and the world. Policy decisions to guide the army of employees were critical. News Departments, their correspondents, the field teams — all depended on these basic policy decisions in developing what to cover, and what to say when covering it. The network bosses — especially at CBS and NBC — had clearly made a fast decision to get on the right side of youth in this emergency. Major print media had also made that decision.

And so, even while the results of the ongoing studies were pouring in, TV personalities — from newsmen to game show hosts to series actors — wore sideburns, moustaches, even beards; they wore huge metal frames when they wore glasses, and they wore bright “mod” clothes. Actresses and newswomen also dressed in the new styles and talked, like the men, increasingly of freedoms, of love and peace and brotherhood; Hollywood and TV stars “confessed” when their own image had been stodgy, that studios and acting parts had really been responsible. TV series, even when essentially “Establishment”, began to have scripts that suggested that love and peace and brotherhood was — and had always been — uppermost in the minds, even if it had not been spoken about. Materialism, the scripts said, had been, and was important, but truth, justice and “higher values” had always been more important. Language changed, as well, slowly at first (like everything else) but faster as it seemed not to be challenged. In what seemed like no time at all, most of the news and entertainment performers on TV and Hollywood — young, middle-aged and old — had re-established their image as “hip” and “together” — or at least so it seemed to them. In the network's new loosened policy, some TV commentators went farther than the bosses had ever wanted. CBS, for instance, had a documentary “The Selling Of The Pentagon” with massive “confidential information” and filming, showing how many millions were being wasted by the military on creating a favorable image with the public. Only a short time before, the networks had been propagandists for the military. But in a TV-dominated society, audience memory was very short.

There was, as the months went by, and the Youth Movement became — if anything — even more radical, a deep and grave concern in the corporate world with the new values which were being propagated. It all hit the Military-Industrial complex at the very guts. The value system, ingrained into America so carefully and at such expense was in danger, threatened by the worst kind of new values — hostility towards Big Business as exploiters and against all Wars as the worst form of immorality. *Aside from the grave damage that such ideology could inflict, changing attitudes and lifestyles and*

*beliefs would make all the mammoth past consumer data obsolete. Marketeers with recognized expertise and years in the business would find their expertise out-of-date.* Already corporations, TV networks and ad agencies had to recruit new personnel, not just young but "aware" young, to become part of the creative teams. For the military, it was more traumatic than for the rest. Not only was its hallowed image being tarnished, but it was now to have extreme problems with voluntary recruitment — increasingly, all its new personnel had to be inducted. Volunteers were not only poorly educated but otherwise, unemployable.

Soon, the halos around the military (including the FBI and CIA), Corporations, even the President, were being knocked around often with the help of major media. Members of media with their newly formed Youth Morality, were uncovering various issues and exposing minor scandals. Once idols are seen to have clay feet, they lose their awe for the public. And once the awe is lost, there could be no telling where it could all lead to. Some years later, numerous cases were to be revealed of illegal dealings, corruption, even blatant law-breaking by corporations, the CIA, FBI, the military. For now, the public did not know that. *But the Military-Industrial complex media and politicians did know.* As we have examined, if matters were not controlled quickly, they realized, there could be nightmares in the future. And for the manufacturing corporations, purely from the sales standpoint, the new epidemic spelt disaster at retail levels. If the Youth Movement's proclaimed contempt for material obsessions became a reality, what about future profits on consumer luxuries? What about planned obsolescence? What of all the many marketing gimmicks developed to instill wants? What about the markets congested and overflowing with brands?

An additional problem for Big Business seemed to be that as TV programming began to lean towards youth values and give added glamor of intellectualism to the new youth, a rash of youth magazines had sprung up and major newspapers as well were learning and expounding youth philosophy and its glamor. They also helped popularizing pop art, psychedelic forms, and all the various symbols of what was now called Pop Culture.

Serious adherents to the Youth Movement now read a lot of it. Fortunately for Big Business however, and for the Power Cartel generally, the *symbols* of youth revolt became more popular than an understanding of the philosophy. As TV increasingly indulged in entertainment programming and news to create buzz words and stock phrases, so too the symbols became the outward manifestations and the badges for the millions of young aspirants as they eagerly strove to join their peers.

(iv)

To the intellectual in America, the essence of the entire youth revolt had great potential, yet there were fears that it would soon fizzle into another fad as commercial TV and major print media stepped in. It was very late already but with the passion and conviction that some in the movement seem to have, it seemed possible that the democratic process would work to begin a sincere moratorium into what the country had been and how it could be rechannelled to its original concept. There were some truly idealistic spirits among the young in the movement — many who had made remarkable self-sacrifices, considering the intense pressures of their TV upbringing; they had rejected family wealth and tempting corporate careers to satisfy an inner



need and to strive for change. But for the movement as it became national, there were grave dangers. Youth, in their confidence, did not recognize the real power of what they called "the Establishment", the true strength of the invisible weapons on the mind. Whether intentionally or not, commercial TV by its very nature tended, when it jumped on the bandwagon and found a profitable formula, to use it till it wore thin. Now it popularized the cliches and the buzz words of the new vernacular and along with "youth oriented" print media, the superficial symbols. Insofar as youth was concerned, despite everything they claimed to reject, *they were the products of the Television age*; they had, as studies showed, watched an average of 20,000 hours of TV by the time they were out of their teens. These "radicals" were the first of generations that had grown up watching TV more than any other occupation, even school.

But if the Power Cartel in general recognized that by creating a national fad, TV had really defused much of the movements away from the real values struggle, they did not show it. The fact that TV had led all the other media, many of whom were now also strongly against the Vietnam War, was obvious. The medium of TV possessed the unique ability to bring graphic details into the nation's living rooms. TV now even boldly brought horrors from the front line of the War to American homes with strong and provocative reports from correspondents — often using Youth vernacular now in doing so. It was one thing for Americans at home to watch edited or planned violence of war, presented with inspring music and emotional slogans, or the heroic shooting by Cowboys. It was quite another to know American youth were being truly killed and to sometimes even see it happen, along with the perpetual horrors of the plight of the Vietnamese villagers and their deaths, their screams, their dying children. The average American's brain may have been seduced, but he and she still had a heart.

By now, of course, with a good deal of research backing, Big Business advertising itself had been suitably changed to allow for Youth values. On the anti-war sentiments, corporations were now falling over each other in proclaiming themselves for love and peace and brotherhood. Oil and chemical companies led the rest in very well composed and moving tributes to the value of preserving nature and voiced themselves strongly for ecology.\*

But even as they did all this, they waited for Nixon to do something and bring back the good old days. For the Power Cartel felt very fortunate that their efforts and money had succeeded in getting their favorite man into the White House at least, if only through a series of fortunate occurrences and by the narrowest of margins. They waited now for him to put his plans into effect.

(v)

Nixon's "secret plan" was really to bring about a phased withdrawal of American involvement in Vietnam and this, he now felt certain, would quell the youth.

Nixon was certain this was all that youth really wanted. His own success in politics was based upon the inculcation of materialist values, and all those tendencies ingrained since the 1950s into Americans that were now being questioned and ridiculed by rebellious youth. Nixon refused to believe that American youth of the

\* Dr. Golley of the University of Georgia aptly termed this hypocrisy to be "eco-pornography".



1960s, bred in that value system, could be that different from it. And there was evidence to show that they were merely mouthing these new concerns without any deep convictions. If youth was so strongly against War and killings as it claimed it was, why had there not been a strong voice raised among them against the Israel attack on the Arabs in 1967, the subsequent conquest of Arab lands, and — by now — frequent Israeli bombing of Arab countries? So far from protesting, youth had taken time off from their values rebellion to wildly celebrate Israel's victory in 1967. Jewish youth, if religious, may see the special prerogative of Israel as the land of The Chosen Race. But most of the youth professed not to belong to organised religion. Richard Helms, Nixon's CIA Director, himself had strongly concluded in a memo to Nixon, that American youth were really as "conservative" politically as their parents, but were only voicing those new values tantrums because of their dislike for going to war in Vietnam. Nixon agreed.

In reality there was a difference between the Mideast horrors and the Vietnam horrors of course. That difference was media — movies, print, and above all TV. Media had conditioned Americans so thoroughly that most Americans could only think of Israel with sacred, sentiment and emotional overtones, Biblical prophecies, the killing of Jews by Hitler's Fascists and the brilliance of its military operations. The heathen Arabs paled into nothingness in the American conscious mind. On the other hand, by now, TV was reporting with gruesome reality, the horrors of killings on the Vietnam front, the American dying and the Vietnamese' hell.

(vi)

It is not pertinent to delve into what transpired before and after the 1967 Middle East War, even though U.S. media's rendering was, from now on, to be so thoroughly distortive that on occasions it bordered on the comic-grotesque. But it did work very well in its objective of keeping the American public entirely committed to the Israeli viewpoint.

It is however important to note that there have been many Jews, intellectuals, religious, who have criticized perhaps more strongly than most non-Jewish critics, events and objectives from the early Zionist congress to the formation of Israel, the 1967 War and thereafter. Needless to add, they have been entirely censored out of commercial media. We might, for brevity, consider just a few such comments that made one think, dig deeper for facts, not dismiss all Arab claims as pure propaganda.

Perhaps the most touching record we have of early dissenters are the words of Ahad Ha'am. After the First Zionist Congress before the turn of the century which he attended, Ha'am said, "In Basel, yesterday, I sat lonely among my brothers, like a mourner at a wedding ... We have destroyed much more than we have built up". Many years later, after great bloodshed of the Arab inhabitants in Palestine, now an old man, he wrote letters to *Haaretz*, the Hebrew daily: "Jews and blood! Are there any greater contradictions than these? ... My God, is this the end? Is this the goal for which our fathers have striven and for whose sake all generations have suffered? Is this the dream of a 'return to Zion' to stain its soil with innocent blood? ... And now God has afflicted me to have lived to see with my own eyes my own mistakes [in having been party to Zionism] ... If this be the 'Messiah', then I do not wish to see His coming..."

Professor Martin Duber wrote (in the Hebrew magazine *Ihud*, Jan. 1962)

"Only an internal revolution can have the power to heal our people of their murderous sickness of causeless hatred [for the Arabs]. It is bound to bring complete ruin upon us. Only then will the old and young of our land realize how great was our responsibility to those miserable Arab refugees in whose towns we have settled Jews who were brought from afar; whose homes we have inherited, whose fields we now sow and harvest; ... whose cities we have robbed, we put up houses of education, charity and prayer while we babble and rave about the 'people of the book' and the 'light of the nations!'"

Dr. Judah Magnes (*For Zion's Sake* by Norman Bendwich) said, "We seem to have thought of everything except the Arabs ... Is our nationality like that of all the nations, pagan and based upon force and violence, or is it a spiritual nationality?". Professor Maurice Cohen (*A Dreamer's Journey*) wrote "Zionists fundamentally accept the racial ideology of the anti-Semites but draw different conclusions. Instead of the Teutons, it is the Jew that is the purer or superior race. All sort of virtues, idealism etc. are the [presumed] characteristic qualities of its spirit".

In her book *With My Own Eyes* (Itaca Press, London), Felicia Langer an Israeli lawyer (admittedly a socialist) described, with names and detailed cases of monkey trials and tortures to which Arabs in occupied areas were being subjected. In a foreword to that book Mr. Israel Shahak\* (not a socialist) President of the Israeli League For Human And Civil Rights wrote "While I oppose communism and Marxism... nobody in my opinion, whatever his political or philosophical opinions can deny that the cases of persecution, oppression and torture described in this book are not only true in themselves but are also characteristic of Israeli rule in the occupied territories ... we used to think that with better documentation, with more reliable testimony ... those who have closed their eyes would be convinced, at least to the extent of asking questions; that the voice of suffering humanity would at last be heard and perhaps answered. But up to now in Israel, this has not happened at least among the majority ... This book can be a beginning of a great and positive change, not only in Israel but in the whole world, but of course on condition that it is read and discussed. I very much hope that its fate in Britain and in English-speaking countries will not be like its fate in Israel. There, although published, every attempt was made to silence it. Of all the numerous bookshops in Israel, only three agreed to sell it and naturally all the daily and evening papers and other media completely ignored it".

That book of Felicia Langer, like articles and books of other dissenting Jews, was totally ignored by American media and found no distribution at all.

But then in the U.S. the strong views of that remarkable octogenarian, Moshe Menuhin had been silenced for decades and were to be kept suppressed in future years. Moshe Menuhin, the father of violinist Yehudi Menuhin, a descendant of generations of Rabbis (his grandfather Rabbi Yehuda Laib Menuhin was a leader against political Zionism) and a highly religious man, had strong views against the conversion of Palestine into a Jewish State, against the massive killings and removal of the Palestinians from their homeland. His objections were not merely on humanita-

\* In one of many letters to Mr. Moshe Menuhin, the American Jewish patriarch who had devoted his life to opposing political Zionism, Mr. Israel Shahak wrote "I had been a brainwashed Zionist till the 1956 War. What made me think was the notorious massacre at Kfar Lassem and the proclamations of Ben Gurion about the annexations. Then, the 1967 Six-Day War: the cruelties, the expulsions, the lies, the wish for further expansion [by Israeli Zionists] all made me a real activist ... our [Israel's] Nazification is the worst fate which can befall us".

rian grounds, they were on religious grounds too. Mr. Menuhin, quoting the Torah, said there was nothing in it to justify the Zionist claim that God intended the Jewish people to return and take over the Mideast. In fact, Menuhin claimed it was merely a political expansionist plot of a worldly Zionism, having nothing to do with religious Judaism — except that the sins committed thereby, would eventually cause the Jewish people even greater punishment in future years from God. “I am a Jewish critic of Zionism — rabid, aggressive, secular Jewish, political Zionism” wrote Mr. Menuhin (*A Testamentary Essay*). “When a Jewish critic of Zionism gives an account of conquests, occupations, murder, napalming, exiling, dispossession of the subjugated innocent Arab population, or of torturing suspected Resistance Fighters (terrorists, the Zionists call them) or of dynamiting Arab homes and villages, no honest observer can call it dramatizing, rhetoric, self-hating, anti-Semitic, Jewish disloyalty. On the contrary, the moral imperative — call it the prophetic Judaism of the Jew — demands the exposing of the immoral and inhuman deeds practiced in the manifestation of the decadence of Judaism in our times” wrote Mr. Menuhin.

Born in Russia, in a prominent Hassadic family, the grandson of Liubavitzer rabbis, he had studied under orthodox Jewish preachers and lived for several years in Palestine before he migrated to the U.S. in 1913. “Zionism as Greater Eretz Israel under the excuse of ‘secure boundaries’ has become unwittingly, the most dangerous world issue between the United States and the Soviet Union, as a result of Zionist machinations in the United States — their propaganda, their hold on the Jewish voters and more importantly, on Jewish contributions to political campaigns,” he wrote in the same essay. In another article (*The Stifling And Smearing Of A Dissenter*) Mr. Menuhin outlines the horrors he was subjected to, first when he attempted to get his book *The Decadence of Judaism In Our Times* published.

William Zukerman in 1960 dwelt on the degeneration of the United Jewish Appeal. “The United Jewish Appeal” he said (*Jewish Newsletter*, Feb. 22, March 7, April 4, 1960) “which started out as a purely philanthropic and humanitarian organisation has, since the emergence of the State of Israel, become an arm of the Jewish Agency, a department of Israel’s government. Instead of helping impoverished to reconstruct their lives ... it has become primarily an agency for financing ‘ingatherings’”.

It is important to note that Jewish critics were not merely critical of Israel on humanitarian grounds. As Professor Noam Chomsky and intellectuals like Dr. Arthur Lillianthal would often write over future years, as would many Jews within Israel, their criticism was due to concern for the moral wellbeing of the Jewish people, in what they saw already as a Fascist state.

(vii)

Despite their proclaimed cynicism about media, youth were deeply conditioned by media, as children of the TV age, bred to be chauvinistic, a chauvinism that convinced most of them that since their parents knew little about youth values, these values had to be *new* to all the world. And only *they* were capable of finding solutions. The problem was that they did not know what the solutions could be, if any. Some, as we have seen, turned to hard drugs, some searched valiantly in various *adaptations* of other cultures — adaptations made by serious as well as exploitative leaders. Cults began to mushroom, each an American version.



But perhaps the greatest setback to the sincerity of the movement was the resultant egocentricity that most of the young could not escape. Media told the young every day, in every way, that they were not only the most intelligent, advanced, who had somehow crashed the barriers of time in their concepts, but the most moral too. In that consuming egocentricity, many of the impressionable young ceased to examine their own motivations at all times, their own double standards, even as they questioned the double standards of their older generations. Highly conscious of every aspect of media corruption on others, they were unable to consider these dangers to themselves.

And in their mockery and contempt for Nixon, even the sincere among youth underestimated his hate for the values they wanted. And they naively underestimated the Power Structure, that machine that was behind him and which was gearing up as a Cartel to deal with them.

Nixon was not a "new Nixon" as his immense advertising campaign for election had made him out to be. But he was a new Nixon in that after losing the 1960 presidential election and even the bid for the Governorship of California in 1962, he had retired from politics ("You will not have Nixon to kick around any more" he bitterly told the press) into a law firm partnership which included John Mitchell (subsequently his campaign manager, his Attorney-General and after Watergate, convicted on several charges to nine years in prison). Now he was finally President and the "new" Nixon intended to use every marketing and electronic gimmick to stay President.

Very few people knew of the Nixon campaign marketing practices like his multivariate studies. What was better known — at least to those who had bothered to read *The Selling of the President* by Joe McGinniss — was how the advertising campaign packaging of Richard Nixon had been successfully executed. McGinniss, a member of the Nixon team, had become sufficiently disenchanted by what he saw in the advertising planning, to break away and write the expose.

He describes, through the book, the many ways Nixon duped the voting public. What we might consider here is just a couple of representative examples of these practices; it is, however, much more important to understand what the overall implications were in a campaign which was not merely planned to use all the available techniques of image-making, like any underarm deodorant, but how it was all based on the premise, as McGinniss proves, *that voters were known to be easily fooled because detailed study of any issue either bored them or was too involved for them to understand.* With half truths, and what Richard Rovere had coined to describe Joe McCarthy in the 1950s, the "Multiple Untruth", Nixon made of himself a newly packaged product that made the voters buy him. And with that success, he had proceeded to use the successful ploys to keep himself in office too. In this context then, we might consider just how the President of the U.S. had finally achieved his life's ambition; and importantly what kind of precedence this was to set for other political aspirants. It was no longer the standard "political hogwash". It was a lot more dangerous and devious.

A few days after being nominated by the Republican Party in 1968, Nixon announced, "I am not going to barricade myself into a television studio and make this an antiseptic campaign." He then proceeded to do just that. He refused to debate Humphrey, but to show he was not afraid, he announced he would hold "open forums" on TV and answer questions live, from any members of an audience. What in fact he and his planners did was carefully select people (the story of the "token black" roped in is too long to repeat) and ensure that they asked just the questions that Nixon

wanted. In the November TV "Marathon" heavily promoted to be on the same "unrehearsed" bases, with voters calling in, McGinnis (who was there) reported that questions phoned in were merely *changed* to the ones Nixon wanted to answer.

Earlier, in one of the TV commercials filmed in Ohio, Nixon had said, "People are much less influenced with image arguments than are columnists, commentators, pollsters. And I for one rejected the advice of the public relations experts who say I've got to sit by the hour and watch myself. The American public may not like my face but they are going to listen to what I have to say". This was Nixon speaking to the public. In reality, writes McGinnis, Nixon the candidate "depended on a television studio the way a polio victim relies on an iron lung".

Many in the public were convinced that what they heard him say must be the truth; they believed the image that he wanted to project — the principled, honest politician who hated all the new image-making gimmickry, and refused to be made unnatural by PR and TV experts; he knew his looks were not too glamorous, that he was ungainly in appearance but his honest worth would overcome all those superficial disadvantages.

To the young, he was contemptible. Among their own angry posters on Nixon (prepared *not* by the Nixon crowd) was the one that said under Nixon's photo "Would you buy a used car from this man?". Another made use of the Nixon campaign slogan but added a black pregnant woman with the slogan "Nixon's the one".

Treleven, advertising chief of Nixon's campaign, had written in a memo of instructions to Nixon's speech writers, not to worry about the more serious and complicated issues; "Most national issues are so complicated [to the public]... that they either intimidate or, more often, bore the average voter...". God, country, flag, flattering the voters, these were apparently the most important matters to stress instead. Raymond Price, Nixon's top speech writer, in assessing Nixon's image during the 1968 campaign seemed to agree. He wrote in a memo "(Nixon) has come across as a person larger than life, the stuff of legend. People are stirred by the legend, including the living legend, *not by the man himself*. It is the aura that surrounds the charismatic figure more than it is the figure itself that draws the followers. Our task is to build that aura".

"Nixon has not only developed the use of the platitude, he's raised it to an art form" said Jim Sage, Nixon aide and professional photographer, to McGinnis. "Its mashed potatoes. It appeals to the lowest common denominator of American taste. Its a farce, a delicious farce; self-deception carried to the nth degree."

And then there is the fitting round-off to it all, the comment of Roger Ailee, Nixon's advertising production chief in 1968: "*This is the beginning of a whole new concept. This is it. This is the way they [i.e. Presidents] will be elected for ever more. The next guys up [for election] will have to be performers*".

It had always been Nixon's all-consuming ambition to be President. He had been forced into obscurity and suffered agonies seeing his hated rival, John F. Kennedy, not only win the hearts and minds of Americans and people around the world, but refer to him, Nixon, with contempt, even with *charity* (claiming that Nixon was "sick"). Now, by a miracle, he had made a comeback. And he was going to use every device that he could think of, *anything*, to stay in that White House.

But while the marketing experts may have taught him about the latest marketing and advertising techniques, there was little they could teach him about the American people. He was, in his own right, a brilliant marketing man, in that he knew what made Americans tick, deep down. *People as they were*, however, not changed by these



hysterical youngsters with their new values. Not only were the new values abhorrent to him, *but they would jeopardize that very appeal that he had always, to a large section of the American Public.*

(viii)

When Nixon commenced to withdraw American troops from Vietnam, he ran into trouble. The problem was that the North Vietnamese, knowing now that the "secret" Nixon plan was merely a Vietnamization plan (withdrawing Americans but training South Vietnamese to take the full burden of combat), and knowing the urgent American timetable of withdrawal to calm domestic unrest, were taking increasingly to the offensive. To accelerate withdrawal under such circumstances was to lose, even ridicule, the old argument that American presence in Vietnam was aimed to "make the world safe for democracy". There is little doubt that at the start there were many who had truly believed this, but now, with increasing public anger against this involvement, even Administration spokesmen were not using this phrase any more. Instead they told America that it was Democrat Kennedy who had got us involved and Democrat Johnson who had sent in combat troops. The Democrats retaliated with evidence to show how it was the Eisenhower-Nixon regime who had made the initial commitment, that Nixon had been a strong advocate of American involvement even in the early 1950s when it was started under Truman. Republicans said Truman, the Democrat, had sent money first to the French during the Indo-China War; Democrats said that was because the Republican cold warriors had arm-twisted him. By 1969, there was hardly any politician who spoke in terms of moral grounds for being in Vietnam. Yet this could not be openly flaunted.

There was more than one trauma now for America in the Vietnam War. There was the great loss of American lives; there was the horror of watching war scenes, now occasionally not even laundered with editing, as they once had been by TV. There was the changing attitude towards war, generated by the young and the peace advocates; there was the great loss of prestige and respect for America in many parts of the world. And then there was the inner trauma so hard to voice even to one another, yet so real in the American psyche — the ignominy, the shock of actually being on the defensive against primitive Asians.

The average American learnt to ridicule and laugh at Asia from TV, but even schools taught little else. School texts were also made by commercial corporations, often the same conglomerate as TV networks. A study was finally conducted in 1976 by the Asiatic Society of text books used in American schools; 306 prescribed books with Asian content were studied. The matter they provided was found to be appalling. McKin Marriot, anthropologist with the University of Chicago said: "Four-fifths of the texts seemed to me definitely negative and damaging in their educational effort. Two-thirds were filled with factual fallacies". All this had, of course, been heavily augmented by commercial media and most of all by the many TV shows and news reels, emphasising just this peculiar Asia. In Korea, Americans had not looked for anything different and in the involvement of War, boozing and dance hall B-girls, they found nothing to change that image. And even if a few did, would it not reflect on their own urbanity to *admit* they saw any civilization there? There was almost a status value in *not* being able to pronounce Asian names or know anything Asian.

What was later forgotten is that, to most Americans in 1965, there had been no



doubt at all, that the Vietnamese would run like mad as soon as the Marines arrived. Then, it was felt it would perhaps take a few months to make the North Vietnamese surrender. The only strong criticism, then voiced by some in the public against the Johnson Administration, was its gingerly attempt to control the North, rather than to "bomb them into Kingdom Come" or "into the Stone Age", as Senator Goldwater and his supporters had urged.

Now nearly five agonizing years later, everyone wanted the whole mess ended. Bitterly disillusioned were those who had felt at least half-seriously that just John Wayne riding straight in the saddle, or TV's "Hogan's Heroes", or the "Mission Impossible" team, could by themselves have taken care of the Gooks. There was bitterness now at all that Vietnam represented. American combatants in Vietnam often felt the same way about both North and South Vietnamese. The cold blooded massacre of Milai (Me Li) women, children and old men, later revealed, was, according to many returning veterans, one of frequent massacres not reported, simply accepted. Whether it represents normal confusion or simply disinterest is hard to tell, but frequently there was fear expressed by the South Vietnamese villagers (according to some correspondents in Vietnam) that they faced more dangers of death at American hands than the Northerners, because the incidents of errors by American bombers were so frequent. Aiming for North Vietnamese targets, American planes would often bomb entire South Vietnamese villages and small towns to smithereens.

The problem for Nixon in Vietnam was that the extensive publicity of anti-War sentiments in the U.S. was well known to the North Vietnamese, as was Nixon's desire to claim he was bringing American involvement to an end. The North Vietnamese fought harder. In 1970, in order to cut off the Viet Cong supply lines, he and Kissinger decided to bomb Cambodia. They carefully hid the incessant Cambodia bombing plan from the Congress and the American people for months because it meant in effect *spreading* the War into a new country.

When the truth did come out, there were riots on American campuses. In keeping with the firm policy, the National Guard were called, who in an automatic response to Nixon's much publicized attitude of strong action against the "bums" on campus, proceeded to shoot at the students. Four students were shot dead at Kent State University; shortly thereafter two black students at Jackson State were shot dead by the police. Anger and rioting spread to campuses all across the country.

Nixon, however, was still convinced that the vast majority of the young would return to the fold with the end of American involvement in Vietnam. He concentrated on this, even while he and his supporters had already commenced a counter-offensive against media critics and the doctrine of the Youth Movement, to discredit and contain it, until the eventual end of American involvement in Vietnam.

On one level (as it was later to be revealed in the Watergate hearing), the Dirty Tricks that were later to play havoc with opposing presidential candidates, were also employed against youth dissenters. Pro-Nixon youth were dressed and bearded like the radicals and *made to act as obnoxiously as they could in gatherings where Nixon and his supporters spoke*. It was aimed to anger the crowds and increase sympathy for the Administration.

But the major counter-attack was through Spiro Agnew, the Vice-President at the helm, just as Nixon in his Vice-Presidency had once taken the lead of the anti-communist bloc.

It was a very carefully prepared plan, with Nixon's own speech writers and image merchants, backed by the top echelon in the Power Cartel.

Commencing November 13, 1969, Mr. Spiro Agnew had already launched a planned speech campaign that was to gather momentum over the next two years\*. By 1970, he was in full swing. He attacked the Eastern Establishment News Media which he said had a monopolistic hold on American minds, with which it was creating factions, encouraging youth rebellion in an ugly plot along with "elite snobs" and intellectuals and liberals, all forcing their foreign philosophies on the American people, the backbone of America. The "Silent Majority" he said were fed up, were so respectable that they did not want to talk in public. But he urged the great "Silent Majority" to talk back and fight to preserve the great traditional American Materialistic Values, about which there was absolutely no reason to be ashamed. He suggested that the anti-War and youth dissension was communist-inspired and may well be communist-financed. If they — the Silent Majority — really wanted to uphold values they cherished, and the country they had made the greatest in the world, they should pick up the flag and stand up against the invasion of dangerous new ideas.

That speech and subsequent speeches, all had the familiar ring of the Joe McCarthy campaign of the 1950s and that of Vice President Nixon of that era; only greater stress now was against not only communist sympathizers but intellectuals, liberals and "bleeding hearts".

It was all extremely well organised, and carefully worded. The speech writers (reportedly including Nixon himself and writer Pat Buchanan) had also taken great pains to include many polysyllables and catchy phrases in each of Agnew's renderings, so that the "Silent Majority" would be suitably impressed. Even if they could not understand all the words, they could feel proud that in their new leader they had a man of learning, no less than those hated intellectuals. In this milieu, to many, intellectualism was no more than the use of polysyllables.

At first though, there was some confusion. Middle America looked at Middle America and wondered if they were included in this august body called "Silent Majority". Once they realized they were, they rushed to the new hero. Agnew, an unknown and much joked-about Vice President, was suddenly the darling of vast stretches of Middle America, from blue collar to farmers, housewives to company executives. The new value system of the young had been revolting to the greater mass of Americans. Middle America had not voiced their opposition from embarrassment and fear of ridicule. Now Agnew had given the Silent Majority a respectable cause, even a kinship with the Rich and the Mighty. And they scorned Youth and major media, including the TV networks. Worse, the greater number of small town Republican newspapers and TV stations now took up the cudgel, not merely to win favor with their readers and viewers, but because they felt strongly about material values (in fact 70% of TV stations and 90% of America's newspapers were Republican owned), and they loved the opportunity to criticize their giant competitors. It was a dark time for the TV networks.

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\* Spiro Agnew's first speech launching the attack against liberals, "pinkos", news media, "bleeding hearts", and "do-gooders", was made at a Republican Women's meeting in Des Moines, Iowa. Joe McCarthy had launched his 1952 attack campaign on communists intellectuals and communist sympathizers at a Republican Women's meeting in Wheeling, West Virginia, when Nixon was Vice-President.

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To understand the apparent contradictions, and the adversary roles between the Power Cartel segments, we must understand that these were very difficult, frightening times for them. As the governing authorities — each institution in its own way, and as a Cartel when needed — over American life and thought for so many years, complacency had set in; their individual “think tanks” and strategists had not been called upon to pool their resources together for a common Cartel strategy in a long while; each institution, and segments within each, (competitive corporations, individual TV networks, newspaper empires etc.) had concentrated upon competition against one another. The black movement, the anti-war sentiments, above all the new values movement, coming all at once, had caused panic, leading to some cooperation between them, but a tendency for each to try and save himself first.

The decision of the TV networks — and some of radio and print — to jump in with the anti-war, new values movement, had been one of expediency, but also one which made good sense, even from the standpoint of the Power Cartel interests in the long run. It was the simple “bait and switch” ploy, of winning over the youth, the blacks, re-establishing credibility with these radical movements then slowly drawing in the dragnet, bringing them back into the fold of the 1950s values again.

There were younger employees in media and within corporations who had, to some degree, been charged with the youth movement values, at least selectively. At middle management, there were some who were relieving their own suppressed ideals, at least occasionally. But many — such as the sales executives in media, brand management in corporations, and account executives in ad agencies — were appalled at the “liberal” trend in TV network programming and news. Their day-to-day operations, their earnings and their future careers seemed to be in jeopardy.

At the top, some of the Power Cartel had felt betrayed by the TV networks and the “eastern establishment” media generally, not because they did not understand the “bait and switch” objectives, (which they did) but the speed and degree to which the networks had gone “radical” in some instances. The loosened reins at the top of the networks had allowed some of the more gutsy newsmen to exposés, such as *The Selling of the Pentagon* by Roger Mudd, strong criticisms about the Vietnam war and the corrupt South Vietnamese government; even frequent airtime to Ralph Nader, the dedicated consumer advocate, and his followers, in exposing many aspects of corporate excesses.

But if the rest of the Power Cartel had felt betrayed by media, it was now the media who felt betrayed by Spiro Agnew. It was, in the real sense, no more than a quarrel between family members, but it could be very damaging to the image of the networks, among the public. Contrary to popular belief, the top network bosses were Republicans, had strongly supported Nixon, voted for Nixon. But as the kingpins of what were now empires, they had to be politicians and diplomats within their domain with their individual armies of employees. Many of these employees saw things their way, but others did not. Care had to be exercised through the years, for instance, in how policy was worded for the rank and file employees; profit-oriented reasons were thoroughly acceptable, but not sharp political affiliations, in particular, not image-making intents to govern the American public, except in the flag-waving sense.

In private, the Nixon White House reportedly had already made deals with the network bosses on anti-trust actions against them. What had irked the Nixon White



House most now was that in the new "liberal" swing, the anti-Nixon commentators had been allowed free reins. The network management had tried to profit from the current mood of America, and therefore had in that sense betrayed the Nixon White House. In the near future, the network bosses, like CBS's Paley, made amends to Nixon, by restraining the exposure of documentaries about Watergate, even when these scandals were already more than mere allegations. It has even been suggested by former network correspondents like Daniel Shore that the top bosses at the networks had given at least their implied consent to the Agnew attack.

In any case, it was significant, that Agnew's denunciation of networks was directed at the networks' viewpoint, its anti-Nixon bias, in the use of its power *for this purpose*. Agnew had *not* objected to the use of public air waves for the purposes of image-making and propaganda *per se*, through "entertainment" programming. The Agnew attack had to be answered in public, of course, by the networks. The top news "stars" needed to defend themselves, their image with the public, even if they may have been aware of the top level Power Cartel links. Walter Cronkite, the Managing Director of CBS News, was by now the "most trusted" man, according to the polls, in the entire nation. He was also considered the top journalist in the country, even though his "journalism" consisted of broadcasting the CBS evening news for 22 minutes each evening (the other 7½ to 8 minutes of the 30 minute news was advertising of course). Erik Severied was the other major TV news star, a kind of GOP (Grand Old Philosopher) of commercial TV.

Cronkite had been suitably pro-Establishment and the Vietnam War until 1967; his conversion against the War had seemed to coincide with the conversion of the American majority against the War.

Both Cronkite and Severied had been employed after World War 2 at CBS, under Edward R. Morrow. Morrow had apparently not liked them, nor had much respect for their abilities. Cronkite had, in fact, been given his big chance on CBS as the actor host of *The Morning Show*, in which he had, as co-host, Charlesman, the puppet lion. Then he had been anchorman on TV political conventions coverage, on CBS News (when it was 15 minutes), when anchorman of NBC News, John Cameron Swayze, began his news broadcasts with statements like "let's go hopscotching around the world for headlines". Cronkite had worked before at UPI, the news wire service, was familiar with the need for short telegraphic communication; he was goodlooking, performed well in front of a camera, inspired confidence with his speech pattern. After Morrow left, he soon became the top man at CBS News, the Managing Editor, very close to the bosses, very trusted by the American people, and soon a legend on TV News. In his book *Air Time*, veteran CBS News writer Gary Paul Gates, flatters Cronkite (very much a living power at CBS and in the U.S. generally) and tends to belittle the late Ed Morrow but provides some honest insights.

Gates makes some admissions, with regard to the Morrow-Cronkite clashes; he says, "Cronkite more closely resembled the middlebrow, while the Morrow clique identified itself with the [Democratic Presidential Candidate] Stevensonion qualities of elegance". He concedes that Cronkite did have his "blind spots especially in the area of art and culture", and he also concedes that both Cronkite and Severied were cunning and self-serving in the way they eventually made their way to the top of the CBS ladder, that Cronkite had pompously begun to refer to himself as "The Name" and, according to Bates, was quite ruthless in supressing talented competition like John Hart and Roger Mudd. When Howard K. Smith (a Morrow find) was fired (he went on to become the anchorman at ABC-TV), Bates quotes a CBS News producer

who said, "Smith got into trouble because he refused to play the Severied game". Bates, it must be underscored, tends to be sympathetic towards Cronkite and Severied. While admitting, for instance, to the pioneering efforts of Morrow and Friendly, (even the *60 Minutes* format evolved from them), Bates says their "concentration ... on meaningful issues" and "tone of moral superiority" was "insufferable".

By 1969, Cronkite and Severied were Big Stars, and the Agnew attack, whatever the undercurrents of Power Cartel friction, reflected upon their personal image with the public. They had to defend all journalists as the top journalists. Cronkite became the spokesman for CBS News, on TV, in town meetings, rejecting Agnew's charges of "biased reporting". He said media — especially TV — was always fair, reporting all the viewpoints, even provided air time for opposing viewpoints. The town meetings were a success to some degree, in establishing rapport with the people, who were undoubtedly enthralled to see Walter Cronkite (and sometimes even CBS big boss Paley) in person. But when the dust had settled, the Nixon-Agnew purpose was served.

The programming and news reporting were to return to the pre-new values days. In some ways, it was subtle, obvious in others. Program content became more "traditional", trying more to create an understanding to bridge the "generation gap". Hair grew shorter, general appearance of the TV personalities more sedate. Soon, heavy nostalgia was being generated from the TV screen — nostalgia for the wonderful 1950's, when "all America" was young, and moving economically upwards (only a short while before, the corny aspects of the 1950's had been stressed). And more strongly than ever, patriotism was stressed, by programs and newsmen alike. A few programs, targeted to the young audiences, continued to timidly stress the youth value system, but with heavy moral over-tones, of understanding between generations, of patriotism. Take pride in America, TV said ad nauseum, lets remember that we are all Americans, and after this soul-searching, which no other nation has ever done, we are the most sophisticated nation in the world. If some saw it as overkill, they did not object. Commercial TV wanted, more than anything, at all times, to please all the American audiences, especially those with Disposable Personal Income enough to be important for any of the advertised products. And Agnew's "Silent Majority" was just that.

More important, TV virtually ceased commenting on Nixon's speeches except in a very nominal way, to show how unbiased they were. Which, of course, was what Nixon had wanted all along from those who criticized or interpreted what he said. Agnew had also provoked the "Silent Majority" on that. Why, he asked, did the TV networks have to "interpret" the Administration's speeches to the public? It implied, Agnew told the Silent Majority, that the Networks thought the people were so dumb that they needed these effete snobs from the New York networks to translate for them.

That really angered the Silent Majority. We want no more of your wretched comments, they wrote the networks. Thereafter, Nixon could talk platitudes, and demagoguery and no one commented until well into the Watergate disclosures. Pro-Nixon commentators made full use of the situation. They watched the network and major print reporting and quickly charged bias if even a smile or a word was suggestive in TV reporting. *TV Guide* the magazine with the largest circulation in the U.S. (until it was overtaken by the scandal tabloid *National Enquirer*), even had a weekly "Newswatch" section where such criticism was monitored by pro-Nixon



commentators week after week. (*T.V. Guide* is published by millionaire Walter Annenburg, a close friend of Nixon, Ford and Reagan.)

The tremendous backlash of the "Silent Majority" — undoubtedly more than even the Op-Cons had hoped — eventually began to create a slight problem for Nixon. While it had increased his popularity with the "Silent Majority", it had caused Agnew to become the unquestioned hero. There was now even talk of getting Agnew to run for President, not in 1976 (i.e. after Nixon's two terms) but in 1972. By 1971, the general reaction to Nixon's own presidency was lukewarm at best; it had been a "do nothing" regime. Muskie, the expected Democrat front-runner, was being shown in polls as more popular than Nixon for 1972.

Some dramatic new move was vital for the Nixon strategists. With considerable cloak-and-dagger planning, following the table-tennis socializing between Chinese and American teams, Kissinger arranged the preliminaries, and it was suddenly announced that Nixon had opened communications with China, had received an invitation to visit China, which he had accepted. Either from his considerable gut feeling, or with the shrewd mind of Kissinger, and with or without the aid of further sophisticated research, Nixon had gauged that, by now sick of the Vietnam war and its casualties, the American voters, including Middle America, were generally ready for a Chinese detente. Already the mood for peaceful co-existence had been tested and found general support, since the Glassboro meeting between Kosygin and then President Johnson. Nixon had progressed this further; the China move should help bring back a vast section of the anti-war young into the fold, while the Vietnam war mess was being untangled.

The news of establishing communication with China was enthusiastically received by most Americans, including many of Middle America. Some Americans were a bit skeptical of this major change towards the hated enemy. The more conservative elements were openly opposed to the new thaw. In this they found a friendly spokesman in Agnew, now quite dazzled with all the adulation, and reportedly seriously considering the possibility of contesting Nixon in 1972. Presumably, he was given a talking-to, by Nixon or the Republican leaders, and he curbed his subsequent statements on the subject to mild suggestions of caution in these negotiations with the Chinese.

Nixon's China trip was a huge public relations success. Even the anti-Nixon forces had to concede that whatever his ulterior motives, opening the door to a more healthy relationship with China (whom all the world had by now recognized except the U.S.), was a good one. It was, of course, the kind of move that no liberal President would have dared to make. If he had, Nixon himself would have provoked the public to fury, suggesting communist sympathies as he had during Truman's regime. But despite the disapproval of some of the Southerners and the Conservatives, Nixon was sure he could get away with it. After all, he had been the leading force of the anti-communist bloc in the furious Cold War with Russia and China of the Fifties. Also, the cloak-and-dagger secrecy had a much-needed glamor. Some allies, notably Japan, were upset at the U.S.'s secretive turnabout. They had been made to turn a cold shoulder to China, at U.S.'s direction. Now, without any previous advice, the U.S. had made its sudden switch and left its allies in the dark.

Television gave all praise and full coverage to Nixon's China trip in early 1972. By now the networks were in full swing, propagating the old, safe, tried and familiar theme of Americanism. Aside from anything else, Agnew's charge of Communist-inspired new values had terrified TV reporters as it had all media. It must be



understood that there were some journalists who were genuinely opposed to Nixon for years, whatever their bosses' political affiliations. For them, now, those old Joe McCarthy days of the fifties were still a grim living memory. Even when Nixon, speaking at one banquet in China, plagiarized parts of Lincoln's Gettysburg address with just a few words changed, hardly anyone in media pointed this out or analyzed his motives.

In fact, a new high in chauvinism was achieved by commercial TV at this time; while recognizing with surprise the progress made by the Chinese during the many years of the Bamboo Curtain, as all media did, the ABC correspondent accompanying the President spoke of what he derisively called "proletariate pomposity" of the Chinese. And from the national audience in the U.S. whose vanguard in the Atlantic still proclaimed, "Give me your tired, your poor ..... the wretched refuse of your teeming shores...." there was not even a mild rebuke.

It seemed to signal that by common consent, America had decided that the hated tags of "nouveaux riches" and "Land of the Proletariate" were in the dim, dim past. At least ten years old. Now America was on a conservative drive, and as everyone knew, the conservatives in Europe were mainly the aristocracy, the upper class (if questioned the ABC newsmen would no doubt have argued that "proletariate" was used in a communist connotation, which all of the audience would understand).

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Nixon's popularity was now definitely on the upswing, as he repeatedly announced that he was dedicated to ensuring a generation of peace. Many of the young heaved a sigh of relief at that and were beginning to warm to him. He also announced that with all the heavy burdens of foreign policy, ending American involvement in Vietnam, delicate negotiations with the Russians and the Chinese and all the heavy burdens of the problems at home, would make it impossible for him to campaign much for his re-election in 1972, but he would have to leave most of that to his re-election committee. At once, it made George McGovern, the Democrat already stomping the country as a presidential candidate, seem like a wastral, a Senator with nothing to keep him busy.

But Nixon-watchers were concerned with the announcement. For Nixon, the ultimate politician, not to campaign, was unthinkable, especially when everyone knew how deeply he loved being President. Nixon-watchers were afraid he was up to one of his old games. The Democrats had better be on their guard.

Nixon's former law firm partner and now Attorney-General/Cabinet Minister and close buddy, John Mitchell, soon resigned his position as Attorney-General, the nation's supreme Law Enforcer (in which position he had from his appointment in 1969, made a name for himself as a tough law-and-order man who had no patience with law breakers), and headed the Committee to Re-elect The President (CREEP for short).

It was later explained during the Watergate hearings and Senate investigations, how one of the earlier plans to sabotage the Democrats submitted by the CREEP Security Chief and ex-CIA man, Gordon Liddy, was turned down by Mitchell. It was an elaborate plan involving a million-dollars' expense to compromise the Democrats, using among other things, a yacht with a lot of call girls who would seduce the Democratic leaders in bedrooms with one-way mirrors, behind which the seduction

would be filmed. It was turned down by Mitchell (while still Attorney-General) and the White House because it was *too expensive*. Liddy was sent back to the drawing board for a less expensive plan. In the meanwhile Nixon's "Dirty-Tricks" Department was already working minor miracles. Edmund Muskie had still looked like the front-runner for the Democrate, but before the New Hampshire primary was over, he was destroyed. On stolen letter-head paper of Muskie, literature was circulated by Dick Tuck, the CREEP expert on "Dirty Tricks", to create many enemies for Muskie. Tuck, for instance, had Muskie accuse Humphery, the other Democrat, of sexual misconduct (also on stolen stationery). Carefully planned attacks fabricating remarks in Muskie's name against those of French-Canadian ancestry (which many of New Hampshire's voters were), and constant attacks against Muskie's wife, were launched by Tuck and others of the Nixon Camp through a friendly Republican newspaper, *The New Hampshire Registrar*, whose owner-editor Leob, was a local kingmaker and a fierce Nixonite with tremendous local political power. Leob's own constant barrage of snide attacks and gossip on Muskie's wife so angered the Senator, that finally, he called a press conference, to prove the latest attacks on his wife were lies, and in the process was so moved that he shed tears. That was the end of Muskie. National media communicated their shocked disapproval at such weakness.\* Voters agreed. America did not want a cry-baby President. The Nixon Dirty-Tricks force moved on to new ventures, ranging from disrupting Democratic gatherings, and more forgeries and impersonations to spurious newspaper accounts.

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So much had been written about Watergate, such a glut created by sensation-seeking TV after the case was obvious, that even a brief reference to it seems too much. But it has to be done because so much that happened later developed from the Watergate chicanery.

The Watergate scandals began in 1972 with a relatively minor break-in at the Democratic headquarters at Watergate Hotel in Washington. But in the process of the investigations came wave after wave of disclosures, bribes, corruption, blackmail, physical tortures and all eventually to lead, with dramatic certainty, through tape recordings to the President himself. Perhaps the most loathsome part was not that it was all done so often and with such abandon. The most loathsome aspect (at least for those who have heard the actual tapes of plans worked from the Presidential Oval Office) was how unemotionally, in what casual, matter of fact tones, such plans were made.

CREEP men (all Ex-CIA) were caught in the burglary; while some evidence immediately linked them to CREEP, none of the media seemed to even attempt to follow it up. Except one. Whether for power politics, or a genuine aim to get to the truth, *The Washington Post* allowed its two junior police reporters to keep after the

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\* Later, through internal memoranda of Nixon aides, it was revealed how stories and attacks were mounted in print and TV. The Magruder (Nixon's CREEP, No. 2) memo of June 1970 claimed, for instance, that in addition to the TV network owners (including Paley the boss of the "liberal" CBS), columnists like James Kilpatrick, Kevin Philips, William Buckley, Herb Lewis, Stewart Alsop could all be counted upon to carry out Nixon propaganda in whatever manner the strategists desired. Charles Colson, top Nixon aide, said he could make Paley "jump through hoops".

truth, no matter where it led. And Woodward and Bernstein (soon so tight a team they were called Woodstein), having perhaps nothing to lose and everything to gain by this historic assignment, went after it. Despite, threats, accusations and a good deal of arm-twisting from the White House and from CREEP the *Post* let them, as long as they checked each new finding with two and later three independent sources before writing it up.

Among politicians, only Senator McGovern, by then the Democratic presidential nominee (grudgingly and with considerable party split), talked about the break-in and its ties to the Nixon Committee and the White House. But McGovern combined a sincere, religious concern for the people (he was a minister's son) with an unfortunate tendency to use the wrong words at the wrong time. As a very early opponent of American involvement in the Vietnam War (from the start in fact, when Johnson sent the first troops out in 1965) and strong advocate of social reform (against racial prejudices and for closing tax loopholes that permitted the very rich to pay virtually no taxes), McGovern's election funds were always uncertain and limited. His staff was mainly young and inexperienced. He talked repeatedly about the Watergate break-in and the Nixon involvement as "political espionage", little realizing perhaps that words like "espionage" had psychological overtones of *justifiable* action to Americans after thousands of hours of CIA-style spy stories in movies, TV and the spy novels.

And in proposing the shutting of tax loopholes and ceiling on private fortunes, and guaranteed income for the poor, he not only made enemies of the Fat Cats (provoking most of the frightened Hollywood stars into the Nixon fold) but much of Middle America, including many in the powerful white *lower income*. Unions like AFL-CIO were against McGovern. Some thought he was too socialistic. Others, even some whom the "guaranteed income" would help, felt they did not want it if it meant that all the lazy bums and the blacks (sometimes indistinguishable) were given these handouts, while they themselves would only benefit partially. And still others who were now basking under the euphoria of the new Silent Majority club that made them fellow members with the rich and the powerful, hoped one day to be rich and use some of these delicious tax loopholes themselves. Many blue collar workers were already earning above average income anyway.

McGovern was also for school busing — a reform that frightened even many liberal whites, since it could even require children to be bused to black schools in crime-ridden areas. McGovern had some Hollywood celebrities backing him: Jane Fonda, Shirley MacLaine, Paul Newman, Barbra Streisand, Warren Beatty. But it was just not enough to overcome the political disadvantage of McGovern's innate morality.

On the other side, there was Nixon, coming across as sharp and "upper class" with all corporate Presidents, rich and prominent friends and many movie star supporters, and another impressive expensive advertising campaign.

Nixon's advertising expenditure for the 1972 campaign was — reportedly — \$55,000,000. That does not of course include the several millions transported in paper bags, fictitious bank accounts abroad, the millions secretly contributed by many, including corporations, many of whose chiefs were later found guilty and convicted for it or forced to resign. Many Nixon middle and lower income supporters knew that he favored the rich, even that he gave special benefits to them, but they did not mind. It was the old story again. America's massive working class felt that all the very successful businessmen behind Nixon would make the American economy work again.



Nixon's "weaknesses" were acceptable to many Americans. In a curious way they rather warmed to him for these "weaknesses" which they understood, could identify with. Aside from his love for money, for instance, there was his craving for social climbing. Right after he became President, Nixon tried to get his family traced back to Ireland. Though only about three generations in America, he found to his embarrassment that geneologists could not find who his ancestors were. Then after his first European trip as President he tried to get the White House guards' uniform changed to the historic and medieval costume of Vatican Swiss Guards. Fortunately he was talked out of this. And since becoming President, he acted and spoke of himself and his family, more and more like Royalty. Even the administration "we" that he usually employed about all his own activities, sounded increasingly like a royal "we". None of this bothered most people, who for several years now had been wanting to create a form of Royalty out of the Presidency anyway.\*

An important campaign advantage for Nixon in 1972 however, was a massive amount of Hollywood glitter endorsing and/or making some appearances for him. McGovern's tax reform frightened the stars. Among Nixon's supporters were, of course, such public idols as John Wayne, Ronald Reagan, and Bob Hope. Only Reagan had never made it any bigger than mediocre B-movies, but his popularity and historic talent had borne far greater fruit after entering politics. Marion Wayne, since discarding that first name for the more manly "John", stood for most adolescents' symbol of manhood via his innumerable heroics against the Indian villains of the Silver Screen (Wayne had made over 150 movies — more than any Hollywood performer, killing Indians and badmen to make the West safe for the White Man).

Reagan, like Wayne, was a Western hero actor, had absorbed American history through Hollywood scripts (even in person, Wayne called Americans "pilgrims"). And famous comedian and billionaire Bob Hope had made himself a national hero through his trips entertaining American troops overseas at Christmas. His national image *depended* on the continued respect for War and the troops fighting "over there." Once they had all been struggling actors, with the usual actors' ego and flashy image. Not any more. They all had huge fortunes, were respected members of the Republican party elite, and they mixed with Presidents. Hope not only played golf (an instant status symbol) but he had played it with Eisenhower and now constantly with the Nixon-Agnew crowd (which he carefully referred to, in every personal interview). Reagan was Governor of California, his first job in political life, his reward for campaigning vigorously for Goldwater in 1964.

There is little doubt that, at least on a conscious level, *these men had come to believe in the policies they advocated*. Where would Bob Hope be without Wars, or John Wayne if the fictitious West was shelved and replaced by the real West? Where would Reagan be without the Cold War extremism of Nixon and McCarthy in the 1950s? America had been very good to them. They did not want anything disturbed with change. Besides, the New Morality made these aging sex symbols look like dirty old men with hangups.

Hope in particular had been a great political asset for the Republican Party for many years. As far back as 1941, he had jokes and innuendoes against Democrats

\* One of the prized gifts that Nixon took to San Clemente after resigning was a music box that played *Hail to the Chief*.

even written into his movie scripts. Now he was a good stand-up comedian, aided with what was recognised as the largest and the best stable of gag-writers in show business or politics. The barbs he could throw at political opponents, and now at the New Value Seekers, had a special biting power, because they were often truly funny.

Each of these Hollywood performers was useful in many ways. When Wayne spoke, America saw the great Cowboy, tall in the saddle, who never lied and symbolised solid morality. In Reagan they saw the boyish-if-aged charm of the General Electric Co. spokesman, the symbol of the Death Valley Days, and, like Wayne, the Glory of the West. And Bob Hope's voice *was* the Stars and Stripes made audible, his face the wholesomeness of Middle America and memories of our sufferings and triumphs "over there".

And soon other celebrities took the stage for Nixon. Frank Sinatra, that great singing talent, who periodically fought off charges of Mafia involvement, and problems from his insults directed against Mexico and other foreign countries (which, despite some adverse publicity, had *affirmed* to his many admirers, his deep patriotism) was now a close buddy of VP Spiro Agnew and a strong supporter of Nixon. And Sammy Davis Jr. seemed deliriously happy to be accepted in these august circles, even if it may have been as a token black (the famous photograph catching Nixon's uneasy expression as Sammy Davis hugs him after his victory in 1972, will one day, at least sociologically, have great historic value).

The Nixon planners organized the correct image mix of Tolerance and Conservatism. That conservatism projected a blend of values of the Fifties, a reminder of happy and youthful times. The Fifties were when the "Silent Majority" was young, before their children had grown up to make the parent generation seem dowdy and dumb, humiliate them and arouse secret jealousy with their new Sex without Shame.

And so, even while *The Washington Post* was uncovering and reporting new and increasing evidence that linked the Watergate burglary with CREEP (Committee to Re-elect the President), and then to Nixon's White House, America voted Nixon back into office by what was one of the largest landslide victories in history. Even large segments of youth voted for Nixon. Some hard core idealists were still protesting; many were to march to Washington to object to Nixon's continued bombing of Cambodia. But America generally believed Nixon wanted "to bring the boys home for Christmas" and believed Kissinger when he said "Peace is at hand".

But peace was not at hand. And perhaps, out of anger and frustration, secret and massive U.S. bombing with B-52s commenced on the Vietnam "link" to Cambodia, a peculiar Christmas present, that from Dec. 18, 1972 went on to wrought havoc for 12 continuous days thereafter. Later, the bombing of Cambodia was to become even more fierce and continue until the following August. Like Vietnam, Cambodia was to be made desolate with ruins of human lives and farm lands. The killer chemical, Agent Orange, was used with abandon all the time.

It was in 1975, after Nixon's resignation, that direct American involvement was to end and the films of that last day must forever bear testimony to the tragicomedy of War. TV cameras showed the last groups of Americans April 29, 1975 — civilians, diplomats and military — being bundled into planes, while frantic South Vietnamese men, women and children clung to them begging to be taken and having to be physically beaten away. The Vietcong were already at the outskirts of Saigon at the time, and shortly after, the North conquered the South to make one communist country. Over the next few years, stories of horror suffered by the Vietnamese who

had sided with America occasionally found space and airtime. Thousands of Vietnamese periodically attempted to flee the country — as did thousands of Cambodians from their own totalitarian regimes. Grim stories of mass genocide were occasionally heard. These lands, once peaceful, inhabited by gentle people, were now wastelands, with murderous hate from their sufferings directed towards their own kind.

From its role, America left behind a land with over a million killed, swamped with the deadly chemical Agent Orange, and — at last count — about 50,000 illegitimate children. It was to be one war in which the U.S. refused to pay reparation compensation, a peculiar end to an operation undertaken "to make the world safe for democracy". But that gruesome end was more than two years hence, in the Christmas season of 1972 when, the Nixon-Kissinger anger and frustration was busy sending Cambodia into what their political ally Barry Goldwater had reportedly urged in 1964 for all Indo-China: "The Stone Age".

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Nixon's Watergate would, however, take the headlines soon and after more than 25 months of lies, obstructions and national traumas the evidence was wrenched from him. His top aides were to be found guilty and many jailed. Nixon himself, was to be granted a Pardon by President Ford very quickly, thereby making all the evidence and charges in the Supreme Court proceedings null and void.

Mr. Nixon and Vice President Agnew had campaigned strongly in 1968 on the need for Law and Order, on the need to enforce punishment on lawbreakers. It was, they said, the only way to deal with those who did not respect the law. Nixon's Attorney General John Mitchell, an old crony and Campaign Manager, also spoke frequently on the extreme need not to "coddle criminals". The Administration's hard line against law-breakers was especially firm against anti-war dissenters. Very early in the Nixon regime (March 1969), the first American serviceman was convicted of deserting to Sweden from Vietnam and sentenced to four years hard labor. Mr. Nixon spoke angrily against campus demonstrations; in 1970, he called them "bums" and said the campus authorities should call in the police to deal with the students.

Mr. Agnew, in particular after his "Silent Majority" campaign was successfully launched, spoke almost every week about the need to be strict with these who broke the law and not coddle them. It was the most popular of his criticisms. Unknown to the public, of course, even as he stampeded across the country asking that the Law should be upheld, he was (the evidence later showed) receiving bribe money from Maryland contractors. In the subsequent trial, it was said that among various other corrupt deals that he was party to, from the time he was a Councillor and then Governor of Maryland, Spiro Agnew had been receiving bribes, and forming illegal partnerships with contractors. Some money, apparently, continued to be paid to Agnew even after he became Vice-President. The case was too clear, too full of solid evidence, for the Nixon Administration to do anything to hush it up; Nixon himself, already deep in Watergate revelations was too busy to save himself to help Agnew. On October 1973, Spiro Agnew, in a deal (with the Dept. of Justice) that would avoid the scandal of arresting and placing a Vice-President in jail, pleaded no contest in the Federal Court in Baltimore to \$29,500 income tax evasion. He was fined \$10,000 and given a three year probation. The other charges were not pursued.



In the over-exposure of Watergate-related criminal actions, it is generally not recognized that there were many charges of illegality against Richard Nixon, other than the Watergate burglary and cover-up. The Watergate hearings and related investigations unearthed several of them. Officials, afraid of the President, were apparently unwilling even to raise questions until all the Watergate publicity drew confessions.

It may be worthwhile to list some of these other charges against Mr. Nixon in brief:

- (1) Mr. Nixon's tax returns were deliberately inaccurate for 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972. He had paid virtually no taxes in two of his years as President. In 1970, he paid just \$792; in 1971, he paid \$878. The amounts due from him, were later assessed by the Internal Revenue Service to total \$430,000 if the returns were proper, and \$33,000 in fines\*.
- (2) In the process of making the fraudulent income tax returns, IRS said it was too afraid to question, Mr. Nixon had also claimed vast deductions, among them his Vice-Presidential papers, a practise that had been made not permissible after 1969. His lawyers had merely *pre-dated* the donation of the papers, to get these deductions.
- (3) There were almost incalculable numbers of illegal contributions to Mr. Nixon's campaign. These had included contributions in paper bags, others "laundered" through Mexican banks, included contributions from financier Vesco, (absconding from justice in South America), contributions from Howard Hughes to Nixon's friend Bebe Rebozo, which was claimed to have been later returned except for \$50,000 which was "lost". Nearly 125 major corporations and their top executives were later to be found guilty of such illegal contributions. Many claimed they had been threatened by Maury Stans, Nixon's Treasury Secretary. Stans was later to be indicted along with Attorney General Mitchell but then to be acquitted. Mitchell, of course was to go to jail on other charges on which he was found guilty, including obstruction of justice and perjury.
- (4) Mr. Nixon was accused of using \$2,000,000 of tax payers' money on improvements at his private estates in Florida and California, when official security alterations were being made at Federal expenses.
- (5) There were a series of "special" favors for the major interest groups who contributed heavily to his campaign, such as the giant IT&T (for which his subsequent Attorney General Klindienst was convicted), the Milk Fund contributions, and so on.
- (6) And there were the series of charges on which he was indicted by the House Judiciary Committee — obstruction of justice, misuse of power, failure to uphold the constitution.
- (7) There were many related and alleged crimes, use of Presidential powers for personal ends, to threaten and cajole officials at CIA, FBI, Justice Department; bribery (of the Ellsberg trial Judge); forgeries, misrepresentation; the innumerable lies, the doctoring of evidence including the 18½ minutes gap from the tape

\* It was typically Nixon's style that even while he reneged on paying taxes he made innumerable speeches claiming to express 'law and order' because America's "tax payers" (his supporters) were fed up with coddling criminals and deserved better Government.

and the loss of two other tapes, the use of Presidential powers to intimidate individuals in the press and other institutions.

It took over two years after the Watergate break-in to get the truth out; in the process Mr. Nixon lied innumerable times; he found real and imaginary reasons to delay justice; he fired various officials (including special aides, special prosecutor, and, in effect, two Attorney-Generals) to keep the truth from being known. He issued, after extended court battles, "transcripts" of his tapes, over 1300 pages in length hoping presumably that the public would be too bored to know what they contained. Aside from the fact that it was later found that the "transcripts" were a brazenly inaccurate rendering of the actual tapes, that they avoided the most incriminating conversations, the results were not quite what Mr. Nixon expected. Even loyal and long-time supporters in Government and among the public were startled by what even those "edited" transcripts contained. Newspapers like *Chicago Herald*, an ardent supporter of Nixon said in its editorial (May 9, 1974) "What manner of man is Richard Nixon who emerged from the transcripts of the Watergate tapes? We see a man who, in the words of his old friend and defender Senator Hugh Scott, took a principal role in a 'shabby, immoral and disgusting performance' ... He is devious. He is vacillating. He is profane... His loyalty is minimal. His greatest concern is to create a record that will save him and his administration..." Another newspaper (*Omaha World-Herald*) until then a fierce Nixon supporter, decided to move away; it said in its May 8, 1973 editorial "The thrust of the 1300 pages of the transcript is that of the President trying to save his own skin and would consider any option, however bizarre, if it would help him do that ...". The Archbishop of Los Angeles, Timothy Manning, in a meeting with Roman Catholic Bishops, said "The great tragedy of it is the raising of the 'great lie' that it's all right to do it but 'don't get caught'". Many other supporters in government and out, reacted with similar revulsion. The irony was that Nixon had presumably thought they all knew him to be guilty and would admire his cunning. Perhaps some of them had known and were getting holier-than-thou to save themselves from the sinking ship.

When the more factual transcripts were prepared, and especially after the Supreme Court ordered Nixon to release the more incriminating tapes themselves, the lid fell wide open. At that point, the Senate Watergate Committee had completed its work and the House Judiciary Committee had already begun its hearings into impeachment recommendation. The votes for recommending impeachment on at least two counts were already recorded, almost unanimously. The release of the final tapes containing the evidence that Nixon had known, not only of all the cover-up, but had been the brains behind the cover-up, and that this coverup had commenced immediately after the break-in June 1972, was to cause even his fanatical supporters to shamefacedly change their opinion (or finally abandon ship). In the Judiciary Committee, Sandman of New Jersey, one of the three who had voted against impeachment the previous day, hurriedly sought reporters out to tell them he wanted to change his vote, as did the other two who had voted against impeachment.

Senators Scott, Goldwater and Rhodes were sent by the Republican Party to Nixon at the White House to strongly recommend in the interests of the Party's future that he resign. Many Democrats were unwilling to accept any resignation now. They wanted impeachment. After all the exhaustive and highly expensive cat-and-mouse fights, they did not want Nixon to slip out without official conviction. But cooler minds prevailed. Nixon agreed eventually to resign, and admit his guilt.

But he played his final confidence trick. For his address of resignation on TV he

had carefully prepared (aides insisted that this was a speech he himself wrote), to talk around the issues, to claim he was resigning because of all the "divisions" in government, because he could not be effective anymore. He did not admit his guilt, as he had promised Congress he would.

A furious Congress, aware too late that he had played the ultimate double-cross, once more wanted to proceed with impeachment. But with his resignation, the elevation of Ford to the Presidency, there was no hope of getting a tired and beleaguered nation to accept any more "Watergate" hearings. Within a month Ford had proclaimed a Presidential Pardon to Nixon for all past crimes.

Nixon aides, and those in Government who went to jail for their part in Watergate had all committed their crimes because of a blind, military devotion to obey the Chief's orders. Two top aides, Haldeman and Ehrlichman, friends and devoted supporters (Nixon's "fanatics" Kissinger called them) had lied and defended Nixon to the final hours, even quietly accepting the humiliation of resignation rather than let Nixon's name be involved. Both were to go to jail for their crimes including perjury for lying to save Nixon. Both bore up without disclosing their own *subordinate* roles in the criminality; both tried to get Nixon to grant them Presidential Pardons before he resigned. Halderman in fact tried to reach Nixon until the night before Nixon's resignation, but Nixon would not speak with him. There was of course a reason. By this time, Nixon, it was later reported, had already made his Pardon deal with Ford.

When the dust was to settle from Watergate, all of Nixon's top aides were to spend a long time in prison. Ford's quick pardon of Nixon caused a massive shock of anger across the U.S.. Later Ehrlichman was to break bitterly and even write a novel about a U.S. President who sacrificed his devoted friends for his own ends. Haldeman was to remain silent until Nixon, in the Frost interviews three years later, tended to blame Haldeman. Then even Haldeman's stoic silence was unable to bear up. He finally admitted that Nixon had been behind all the criminality from the start. It was purely academic of course. Only the mentally retarded by now had any doubts about Nixon's guilt — at least until four or five years later when the average American's memory span fizzles out.

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The series of illegal actions, collectively termed "Watergate" by the media, had some interesting sidelights, not the least among them, the absolute blind and dedicated loyalty of the Nixon private army. They did what they were asked without question, because of the august office of The Presidency, whether there were CIA or FBI or Income Tax Officials, or officials of the Attorney General's office or the "Plumbers", the secret and illegal private police force of Nixon (a kind of private CIA). Even more completely dedicated were the many young aides of good education, and America's "best families", who were convinced that as the cream of America serving The Presidency, they represented the very elite of today's world. Many were very afraid (or so they claimed later) that they were doing wrong. Some found that their conscience bothered them too much after their illegal acts and confessed at the slightest opportunity. But none, except one, actually refused to do the illegal. With the exception of Hugh Sloan, everyone felt at least for a while, that if it was for the President, it had to be alright.



There was the eventful night which was to be known as the Saturday Night Massacre, October 20, 1973, which did more in simple terms to make the public aware of, and angry at, Nixon's attitude, than all the evidence that had been piling up during the Senate Watergate hearings. From the standpoint of his popularity with the masses, it was Nixon's worst blunder. He made his guilt *simple to understand* for the masses.

Pressure from the Senate had induced the new Attorney-General Eliot Richardson (succeeding Klieninst who was indicted and later convicted on the ITT bribery matter for perjury), still convinced that Nixon was innocent, to persuade Nixon to appoint Archibald Cox as Special Prosecutor to work full time on all the charges that were growing out of the Watergate disclosures. Richardson saw this as good PR and Nixon agreed to name Archibald Cox; Nixon told America, (on TV) that Cox was to be so independent that even he (Nixon) would never sack him, but would give him full co-operation and ensure that everyone did. Unfortunately for Nixon, Cox was soon found to be too dedicated a man to do the job superficially; worse, he took his job seriously. He kept digging, wanted important documents, and later, on the revelation of the existence of the White House tapes, Cox wanted the tapes. Nixon had successfully rejected claims to the tapes from the Senate Committee, arguing the independence of the executive branch from the legislative. But Cox being of *executive* appointment, could not be turned off with this argument. Nixon and the White House staff, however, turned a deaf ear to Cox's requests. But Cox persisted. Then he filed suit in Court and the Courts upheld his claim. Worse, he let the public eventually know he was getting no co-operation from Nixon and the White House, whatsoever, and prophetically referred to President Andrew Jackson's sacking of three officials to let him (Jackson) have his way with Treasury.

On the fateful Saturday Night, October 20, Nixon decided, to get rid of Cox. He called Attorney-General Richardson and asked him to fire Cox. Richardson refused. Nixon sacked Richardson. He then called the Assistant Attorney-General Ruckelshaus, informed him that with Richardson sacked, he would now be the new Attorney-General, and asked him to sack Cox. Ruckelshaus refused and asked to be allowed to resign. Now it was the turn of the Number 3 man in the Attorney-General's office, Robert Bork, whom Nixon called the same night and also promoted to Acting Attorney-General, with the order that he sack Cox. This one complied ...

Another element of significance in the Watergate affair, was the amazing psychological makeup of some of the participants. For example, Gordon Liddy, the Nixon Committee's ex-CIA Security Chief, whose first plan for \$1,000,000 using mugging, prostitutes, one way mirror to film the Democrats, was subsequently toned down to \$500,000, when Magruder (no. 2 on the Committee) confessed was unanimously approved but which Mitchell subsequently denies approving.

Liddy had some unusual characteristics. He gave startled office secretaries unsolicited life-size posters of himself. He was known at least once to discharge his gas-operated pellet gun into the toilet bowl. And on one occasion claimed he had orders to kill Jack Anderson, the syndicated columnist, high on Nixon's "Enemies List", and a journalist famed for political exposes (Anderson was later reported, during the CIA hearings in 1976, to have been a target for "liquidation" by CIA, with fatal chemicals spread on the steering wheel of his car).

And there was Howard Hunt, also ex-CIA, who wrote spy novels, while with CIA and later as one of Nixon's "plumbers". The other five ex-CIA "plumbers" (other than Liddy) were rather dull and easily fooled. Four of them, Cuban Americans, had

firmly believed they were involved in a Bay of Pigs type of operation, against communists, when burglarizing the Democratic headquarters and the earlier break-in at Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office. (Dr. Ellsberg, a former Pentagon official, had exposed *The Pentagon Papers* about the calculated, callous approach to War.)

But Hunt, while keeping the lid on, even when imprisoned, succeeded in blackmailing Nixon and his aides as a price for his silence. His wife, the go-between, however, was to die in a plane crash right after receiving some of the blackmail money which was found still on her, along with an ominous note "Good luck, F.S."

An example of the comic-grotesque but effective operations was the Liddy/Hunt role in the ITT matter towards Dita Beard, the powerful lobbyist for the giant corporation. Jack Anderson, the columnist had come out with the scoop, revealing Beard's highly confidential memos to the ITT bosses, in one of which she had said that \$400,000 secret contribution by ITT Board President made to the Nixon campaign would successfully overcome the pending anti-trust suits against ITT "Other than permitting John Mitchell (then Attorney-General), Ed Rienecke (Reagan's Lieutenant Governor in California), Bob Haldeman and Nixon ... no one has known from whom the \$400,000 commitment has come" she wrote to her ITT boss. "Certainly the President has told Mitchell to see that things are worked out fairly. It is still only McLaren's mickeymouse we are suffering [McLaren, of Dept of Justice's anti-trust division, subordinate to Mitchell]. I hope, dear Bill, that all of this can be reconciled... if all of us in this office remain totally ignorant of any commitment ITT has made to anyone. If it gets too much publicity, you can believe our negotiations [with Department of Justice] will wind up shot down. Mitchell is definitely helping us, but it cannot be known." The memorandum ends with "Please, destroy this, huh".

With widespread publicity to these revelations, columnist Jack Anderson's assistant anticipating denials later, met Dita Beard, who confessed to writing the memo. Two days after the revelation, Beard was whisked off to a Midwest (Denver, Colorado) private hospital, while newsmen searched the country for her. Gordon Liddy had, it was later revealed, arranged for her disappearance. Later it was also revealed that Dita Beard had a mysterious visitor from Washington. According to *Watergate*, the fascinating book by a team of London *Sunday Times* reporters, "Dita Beard's son Robert recalls him (the visitor) as wearing an outsize red wig which slanted over one eye — 'like he had put it on in a dark car'. In an attempt to disguise his complexion, the visitor had smeared his face with pancake make-up, which, during the course of the interview, began to trickle down one cheek.

"According to [Dita Beard's son] Robert, his entire appearance was 'mysterious ... very eerie'. Robert never discovered exactly who he [the visitor] was or what he had come for. The mysterious visitor was in fact Howard Hunt, who had been sent by [top Nixon aide] Charles Colson to discover exactly what Dita intended to say when her pursuers eventually caught up with her. Shortly after Hunt's visit, Mrs. Beard changed her story: the Anderson memo was a hoax and her initials had been forged".

There were some remarkable and dramatic changes in lifestyle following the exposure, trials and convictions. Charles Colson, the Chief whip of Nixon's Dirty Tricks team, and a Nixon favorite whose motto was that winning is the highest level of morality, whose ruthlessness was reported by many of his co-conspirators to be greatly feared by themselves, was, even before commencing his jail term, to declare that he had seen the Light, that he was from now on a soldier of Christ. John Ehrlichman was, after conviction and sentencing, to grow a beard, write a novel



(about a President who abused the loyalty of his faithful supporters) and generally change his lifestyle to become as close to that of a hippie as someone can, after passing middle-age, with a universal reputation for strong fascist leanings. Even Halderman famous for his very close-cropped crew cut was to grow longer hair even before his court trials and conviction.

And then there was the tragedy of the late Martha Mitchell, John Mitchell's wife, (who died shortly after), whose outspokenness was most feared by the Nixon inner circle. Having announced that she would no longer be silent about Nixon's guilt and have her husband take all the blame, she was placated to some degree when Mitchell finally announced his withdrawal from Nixon's Committee. During the cover-up she was occasionally kept "incommunicado", because of her tendency to call reporters and talk freely. In her divorce proceedings later, and her subsequent appeals that the court-ordered alimony was not being met, she revealed some harrowing experiences. Once having called Helen Thomas, the UPI correspondent, she complained that Steve King, a Secret Service man attached to the Mitchell household, had pulled the phone from her hand, thereafter pulling off the cables of all extensions in the household. And when after three days of captivity, she became too hard to handle, she was drugged. Mrs. Thomas has reported that the telephone conversation ended "abruptly when it appeared that someone had taken the telephone from her hand". In another interview with *New York Daily News* the girl reporter swore she had seen marks on Martha Mitchell's body from beatings.

Perhaps the most fascinating contribution of the Nixon administration was the unique language of the Nixon inner circle. They were loyal civil soldiers and their language generally reflected a kind of army slang, with innovations. The fury of Nixon and his men in refuting charges and then threatening *The Washington Post* and other media was — aside from Agnew's "Silent Majority" campaign — ominous, effective but generally prosaic. Nixon's own "People have got to know whether or not their President is a crook... well, I am not a crook" had comic relief but lacked finesse. Halderman's "I don't remember" to all investigators, while extremely effective to a point, was also extremely pedestrian. John Mitchell's threat "Katie Graham's gonna get her tit caught in a wringer" (about *The Washington Post* publisher) undoubtedly had an imaginative ring to it.

Exquisitely callous but poetic (though bordering on plagiarism) was John Ehrlichman comment in a transcribed conversation with John Dean, when the latter communicated his fears to Ehrlichman. Dean told Ehrlichman that Patrick Gray, FBI chief, was likely to crack under the intensive investigations that had commenced and reveal something of his (Gray's) role in burning the many secret documents that Ehrlichman and Dean had given Gray to destroy (one of which was the forged cable, prepared by Hunt, to implicate the late President Kennedy in the death of President Diem of Vietnam). Ehrlichman, however, was not troubled "Let him [Gray] hang there .... let him twist slowly, slowly in the wind" (inspired by Huxley's *Brave New World*, where the Savage, the last remaining unprogrammed human being in a totalitarian state, has hanged himself).

But, perhaps appropriately, it was Nixon's press aide, whose words seem somehow most memorable and representative of the Nixon White House. After angry denials daily, accompanied often with invectives at the *Washington Post* and other "enemies" for almost ten months after the Watergate break-in, Ron Ziegler in the best military manner, stood before the Press on the morning of April 17, 1973 and uttered the immortal words: *All previous statements about Watergate, he said, "are inoperative".*



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With Nixon out of office, President Ford urged the nation to put Watergate behind it. The public exhausted from the traumas and the obsessive media sensationalism, agreed.

Much of media had conducted extensive discussions on "Where Did We Go Wrong?" (meaning the nation, of course, not media). Some had been more sincere in their attempts to find reasons than others; some more knowledgeable. But the very nature of commercial media's primary objectives made it impossible for these experts to look within with real objectivity, or address the causes with real candor. Media was to come up with some other exposes soon after, of which some at least were useful for the nation, e.g., the revelations regarding CIA and Pentagon wastages. The fact was that after the humiliations of seeing two junior *Washington Post* reporters get world-wide accolades (even the Pulitzer Prize), reporters around the country were hellbent on exposes, even if it might mean upsetting their own bosses and the Power Cartel, at times.

There were also some sincere legislators in Congress who saw the time was ripe to institute some reforms, in the current public mood of "morality in government". Congress passed legislation on public funding of politician's campaigns, then even went on to set ceilings on individual political advertising expenditures. Op-Con politicians were quickly to find ways around the limits on individual contributions, by having created for themselves "citizen groups" and later PACs who claimed to be advertising for that candidate on their own. And the Supreme Court to the further delight of corrupt politicians overturned the law placing ceilings on advertising, by declaring it unconstitutional.

The public was more than willing to leave Watergate behind. Only those who had been through the emotional traumas, especially of those last fourteen months, really knew how exhausting it had been with media's obsessive hour-by-hour coverage of the sensational.

And the public wanted the business of the government to be resumed. They had concerns, now. Nixon, despite everything, they felt, had been qualified to be President. Ford was an accidental President, a Midwesterner who had been a football player, an advertising model (though not every one knew this) clearly not intelligent (President Johnson used to say that Senator Ford could not walk and chew gum at the same time); media said he was "a good guy" but the public wondered, could he actually run the country? Even in the midst of the extemporaneous and tumultuous celebrations that had burst forth the night Nixon announced his resignation, when masses in the thousands gathered in front of the White House to give vent to their feelings ("Jail to the Chief" was one of the most passionate shouts in unison heard all night), there had been great rejoicing that it was all over, anger that Nixon had escaped impeachment after putting the country through so much; but there had also been concern behind the euphoria, even more apparent the next morning, at Ford's swearing-in, that perhaps the new accidental President would turn out to be an Edsel.

The public wanted desperately to believe that it was all over, that the bad guys had finally been caught and expelled, that the new government would be clean, honest, for the people, effective.

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In the wake of the fury from his Presidential Pardon, Ford quickly set about trying to remove all of the Nixon staff from the White House, in order to clean his own skirts of the previous administration. However, he retained one: the kingpin, Henry Kissinger.

Kissinger was now soon to be made into a foreign affairs genius by media. And, along with him, Nixon was also to be styled the great foreign policy expert.

In less than five years after his resignation Nixon would be back, drawing adoring crowds as the great foreign policy maker. Media made it happen. We shall examine media's motives for this somersault, later. But because it would happen, we must, in brief examine Nixon's foreign policy record right here.

With almost thirty years in national politics, on the Hill, as Vice-President and as President, Richard Nixon undoubtedly had considerable experience in foreign affairs. From his first campaign for Congress, he had stood as a fiery anti-communist and anti-Soviet spokesman. His unAmerican Activities Committee escapades, his fusillades against Russia and Communist China had made him the Republican choice for Vice-President under Eisenhower. He had fiercely supported involvement in Indo-China and Korea in the 1950s, he stood ardently with Dulles in U.S. adventures into foreign lands, often just for Big Business, and he fully supported American action in what became known as the Vietnam War in the 1960s — until public sentiments against the War made President Johnson so unpopular, that candidate Nixon came up with the "Secret Plan" or Vietnamization. This Vietnamization as we have seen, turned out to be a disaster for the Vietnamese and led to bitter humiliation for America throughout the world.

Facing even stronger anti-War sentiments as President, Nixon made dramatic moves prior to the 1972 elections — the "historic" visit to China; he had climbed down from the tirades, the denunciation of China, the refusal to even acknowledge its existence, thereby refusing it a seat in the U.N. Exactly what had China done *now* to justify this dramatic turn around, other than be embroiled in what probably was a family fight with fellow communists in Russia?

To peace-loving people everywhere, the end of the belligerence, whatever its motives, was heartening, even if it became clear that what China wanted was technological aid and what the U.S. wanted was trade — the first trade agreement of substance with China was with Coca Cola.

Even more heartening was the move toward "detente" with Russia. Nixon himself chose to call this also "historic"; his visit certainly was, though attempts to thaw the Cold War after the Eisenhower-Nixon regime had been made with the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty by Kennedy and Johnson's meeting with Premier Kosygin. Could any President with a record less hostile towards the communists have dared to make such trips and "detente" without being labelled "communist-pinko" and "Soft on communism" by the likes of Richard Nixon himself?

During the Nixon presidency, the Nixon-Kissinger duo had made some "historic" moves in foreign policy. They had become severe, with what was now to be called The Third World (a highly significant label) and wooed the NATO countries to establishing a Western Alliance. That this Alliance was not based on what was the best in the two power blocs was soon apparent; it was to result in a neo-colonial attitude (fostered now by the Americans) the export to Europe of the American political Image-

Making Machine, to help into power those Europeans who shared Op-Con values and the further extension of power for the Military-Industrial Complex. It worked well; the liberal leaderships in Europe often critical of U.S. foreign policy, had shaken off the post-world War 2 attitude of servitude towards the U.S.; soon, however, they would be out of power. One of the major beneficiaries was soon to be the daughter of a small town English shopkeeper, whose yearnings to be upper class, piggy-backed to Big Business opulence, was only matched in degree by that of Nixon himself, and a certain actor waiting in the wings in Sacramento, California.

In the meanwhile, that Third World was now relatively less naive, often angry at what it understood was being done in the name of Democracy, some of these countries, however, had come to associate Democracy with such practices and turned to the communists.

But the Nixon-Kissinger policy was to eradicate the opposition to American Big Business interests in the Third World; where such opposition attempted to take power, it was crushed; where such opposition came into power, it was removed (at the 1975 Senate hearings into CIA activities, most of the actual CIA adventures were conducted in secret sessions; one that was partly discussed in public was the CIA involvement, with IT&T money, and the apparent directives of the Nixon-Kissinger team, in the overthrow of President Allende of Chile, in the Military "coup" there).

The turmoil in Central and South America, as a result of such activities — from Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, to Panama and Peru — was to grow more violent over the years. Franklin Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy had been the last oasis for the Latin Americans (Nixon had rotten eggs thrown at him when he went there in the 1950s) and there would be another under Carter — but the horrors would become much worse after 1980.

And then there was the Middle East. Nixon had no attachments to Jews but saw them and Israel as very important political allies. Kissinger had obviously deep emotional ties. It was during the Nixon-Kissinger regime that the Israeli withdrawal from occupied lands, following the 1967 War, had been ignored. Resolution 242 of the U.N. intensely mellowed to overcome the American veto, had passed, asking for this withdrawal. But it never came. It was during the Nixon-Kissinger era that the Palestinians and the PLO became, after years of studied neglect, convinced that they had to make the world aware of their existence by radical means.

It was the collective Arab frustrations that led to the 1973 War; the Arabs fared far better than they had before. In fact, at once stage, the Israeli losses of military hardware were so great that, conceivably, Israel would have had to agree to concessions in the subsequent peace negotiations. Nixon, however, (or so he claimed later in his autobiography) ordered Military officials to ignore all red tape and conduct overnight airlifts to Israel. This was done and (according to Nixon) this was what saved the Israelis from defeat.

But it did not save the world from economic disaster — at least those countries which relied heavily on imported oil. There was the Oil Embargo and then the skyrocketing oil prices.

Did the Nixon-Kissinger duo twist the arm of the Shah of Iran to increase oil prices and with the additional billions, buy more American arms? In the spring of 1980, even CBS *60 Minutes* examined the evidence that suggested that this was so. Nixon's own Treasury Secretary William Simon, admitted that this had occurred. So did Aikens, Nixon's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia. Kissinger, of course, denied it. The fact that Iran supplied oil to other countries and (as we shall see), in many ways the



OPEC price hikes *helped* the American Big Business certainly adds credence to the story.

Insofar as selling American arms abroad aggressively, there is no doubt that the Nixon-Kissinger duo set a new trend. If we set aside considerations which Edward Teller would call "merely moral", certainly there were strong reasons, at least in the short run, to support this policy. There was a lot of Military hardware piling up with the accelerating annual Military budget, despite the Vietnam War. And when the War would be over, if the Military budget was not to be slashed (especially with public anti-War sentiments being what they were), there had to be a good justification, for maintaining its annual increases. In effect, the arms industry could then be justified, not only as a source of national security but as an important employment industry and a foreign exchange earner in addition to being a critical form of aid to friends. Under Nixon-Kissinger, U.S. arms sales were to increase by over 100% and lead to a world-wide thriving industry within a few years.

The dangers to America and to the world were greatly increased during the last months of Nixon's presidency. It almost led to World War 3, after the 1973 Mideast War, with Nixon ordering the Seventh Fleet and all overseas troops and bases on alert for the first time since World War 2. Russia apparently also put its troops and bases on alert (later reports suggested that Israel was on the verge of resorting to its nuclear bomb and at Sadat's plea, Russia had sent vessels with nuclear arms). Nixon by this time, was sinking rapidly in public trust under the overwhelming evidence that made it clear to the meanest intelligence that he was directly involved in Watergate. He had already been indicted as a "co-conspirator" by the Grand Jury (a fact which the Public Prosecutor Jaworski had pleaded should not be revealed to the public at the time and it was not). His impeachment was already becoming likely. Reports in Washington grew that Nixon had sought to make an international crisis out of the Mideast to divert attention away from the Watergate hearings. Whether true or not, certainly a subsequent report, at first denied, then later conceded as true but a joke, should have been more than enough evidence to the most ardent Nixon supporter that it was dangerous to let him stay in the White House anymore. The report quoted Nixon as telling his aides that he had a good mind to press the Red Button (signalling Nuclear War) during the confrontation with the Soviets in the Mideast. General Alexander Haig, (Nixon's Chief of Staff after Haldeman was removed) at first reportedly denied the report, then said Nixon had only said it jokingly. That may be so, but considering the numerous daily reports of how perennially gloomy and depressed (and often drunk) he had become all through those days, it is hard to believe that he might be joking.

On another level of personal fallibility, what became submerged beneath all the media din is that, in matters of foreign policy for which he was later to be accorded great expertise and ability, Mr. Nixon was clearly vulnerable and — had he been in power long enough — dangerous to the interests of the U.S. and the free world. The 1950s, which middle-aged Americans looked at with such loving nostalgia, was an era in which McCarthy and Nixon had made every year more dangerous than the last in the ongoing Cold War. The U.S. could have made enormous strides in all that time. The Russians and the Chinese were not fools (TV entertainment programs notwithstanding), they knew just how Nixon had seen them through those years. For them to turn around in the Watergate and post-Watergate era and to be dejected at Nixon's removal is itself significant. Nixon admittedly reduced tensions with his "detente" towards the communists in the 1970s. But did not Nixon's psychological

hangups and the fact that *he was highly vulnerable to personal flattery make him that much of a liability in foreign policy?* Perhaps the communist knew this better than the American public did. It may not have been generally noticed, but it was significant, for instance, how Barbara Walters, then a junior to Hugh Downs in the *Today* NBC Show, chose coyly to announce one morning that she thought Mr. Nixon looked "sexy" — that in an era when most TV performers were making jokes about Mr. Nixon's looks. It was immediately to open doors for her at the White House, to personal interviews not available to others, to a personal invitation to Tricia Nixon's wedding, and through the White House to international personalities, all leading to Ms Walters soon becoming, with \$1,000,000 a year, the highest salaried woman in any profession.

The Nixon-Kissinger approach to foreign policy was set with a yearning to establish a machiavellian reputation; it was true that the 19th and 20th century heroes in British diplomacy, from Disraeli to Churchill, had specialized in colonial gamesmanship. But while this view of the world then, during the glories of the British Empire, may have had its rewards for a while, the neo-colonialism of Nixon-Kissinger, in a fast changing world, was ludicrous, almost pathetic in its motivations, and doomed — except perhaps in the personal satisfaction it afforded these men as they basked in media flattery. The policies spelt disaster for the U.S. and for Democracy.

The tag of "The Ugly American" of 1950s was in this Nixon era to be replaced by more graphic terms in many parts of the world, and none of these terms were complimentary. It is not too much to say that in fact, if there was any one top U.S. official more responsible for policies that made the developing countries become suspicious, angry and even wholly distrustful of "Democracy", that was the long political career of Richard Milhous Nixon.

(xvi)

Something very special had surfaced from Watergate. Foreigners were confused about it, wondered how a President could be removed in such a fashion. There were many Americans who, having voted for him, had at least unconsciously sought to justify their choice by refusing to believe the truth until the very end. And there were many who were concerned about washing all that dirty linen in public.

What foreigners did not realize, however, was that the freedom to criticize even a President was a very precious right in the United States. It had been misused — as it would be misused by the media in the future as well — but that right had been used well during Watergate despite the crass commercialized sensationalism by commercial interests and those who had a special political axe to grind.

Watergate hearings had allowed the submerged, real America to emerge spontaneously. The shocking corruption of Nixon and others was not new; but the sweet, homespun wisdom (even if somewhat staged) of Senator Erwin was a refreshing antidote, as was the quiet respectability of Senator Innouye, the Japanese-American, one-armed World War 2 hero for the Allies; no less impressive was the restraint of the House Judiciary Committee on Impeachment; perhaps most heartening was the integrity of Judge Sirica, a Republican judge dealing with complete impartiality with a crime-ridden Republican leadership.

It would be impossible to communicate the emotions aroused in witnessing that real *other* America emerge from the Watergate corruption, listening to the



incriminating tapes with earphones in that Washington courtroom, tapes of conversations between Nixon, Halderman, Ehrlichman, Mitchell and Dean; the coldblooded, casual discussions in it of criminal planning, to subvert justice in the Oval Office, as if these were everyday affairs; and while listening, to watch the accused, defendants former Chief of Staff Haldeman, Domestic Affairs Chief Ehrlichman and Attorney-General Mitchell in their varied attempts at disinterest with the legal proceedings against them, gazing with studied nonchalance, at the ceiling, at the walls, but never at one another; occasionally unable to control themselves and then shooting looks of hate at John Dean, Nixon's former consul, now confessed co-conspirator, revealing all to impassive Sirica in his precise and detailed style, the elaborate plans hatched in the White House to hoodwink the public, and break the law time and time and time again.

It was washing dirty linen in public. But it showed real Democracy in action; the linen, where washed, came out sparkling clean. America had shown itself to have matured enough to face traumas of such public revelations, and to act out its unpleasant duty.

But then the inquiries stopped. The public was exhausted with the sensationalism of Watergate. And it stopped because media and the new President Gerald Ford asked that it stop. Ford said we must put Watergate behind us and go on.

Yet, buried deep within the system were the causes of Watergate scandals. Richard Nixon and his crowd were in reality only the effects, not the cause. They had merely used the corruption within the system. Nixon's closest friends and allies had long argued that what Nixon had done was not so unusual. They were wrong. Nixon and his aides had done more than others did. They had opened new vistas for corruption and decay. But his supporters were right in that corruption had become a way of life in American politics. The cold, casual everyday tone on the Nixon tapes, when discussing criminal plans attested to the fact that such plans were as much part of the thinking of those present as the more legitimate operations for which they had been elected and selected to serve the public.

The Image and Illusion Making Machine that had been perfected in 1968 was alive and unscathed after Watergate. It had been exposed only in terms of what Nixon had done with it. If anything, the Machine was to learn from the Watergate scandals, to get the bugs out of its skills and operations; to become more adept and more elusive of public exposure in the future. Politicians who had not been aware of how the mixture of marketing skills, advertising and visual media could be made to work for a politician under the direction of skilled image-making experts, had now become aware. The public had only the vaguest idea of what it was all about and would soon push it out of mind. As one of Nixon's top aides, advertising executive Treleaven, had said in his briefings to Nixon for the 1968 campaign "Most national issues are so complicated ... that they either intimidate or more often bore the average voter"; this was to be the central theme in the selection and the campaigning, and in the administration policies of Ronald Reagan. "This is it" said Nixon TV aide Roger Ailes to Joe McGinnis in 1968, while planning the Nixon puffery "This is the way they have to be elected from now on".

The Machine had learnt a lot from the Watergate scandals. Media assured the public that after all this, there would be no more Watergates. It was wrong. There would be no more Watergate *public scandals*. The Machine had learnt an infinite number of subtleties and it had certainly learnt to take the obvious precautions the next time around; there should be no tapes and no squeelers like John Dean and



ex-CIA burglar McCoy, and no backmailers like CIA agent Hunt; no transfers of money in crude ways, no amateurs bungling the works.

As a direct result of Watergate, several legislative issues had to be looked at. "Let us build into the Constitution the provisions to change it from time to time" the farsighted Thomas Jefferson had said; some critical issues needed to be looked at here; the enormous powers vested in the President; his ability to create a Cabinet more powerful than all the other elected officials, out of people he chose who were not elected; his ability to claim executive privilege, to wage War, to funnel huge amounts of tax dollars at his discretion, the lifetime selection of Supreme Court Justices — again only by presidential nomination (Nixon happened to have the opportunity to select four of the nine Justices). Franklin Roosevelt had found himself greatly hampered because the majority of the Justices were appointed in previous Republican administrations, including Chief Justice (and former President) Taft; and while the Nixon appointees were no doubt men of honor, they were, like Nixon, "strict constructionists" i.e., believed that the Constitution should be interpreted by the strict letter of the law, (e.g. "right to bear arms") rather than the spirit of the law; opposing views felt the spirit was more rational, as the U.S. constitution had been enacted in turbulence and with considerable informality. The 1972 attempt by some Congressmen to place a ceiling on political advertising expenditures, had been vetoed by Nixon; after Watergate, a chastened Congress and a frightened President Ford had allowed such a provision to be made, but the Supreme Court had over-ruled it saying it encroached upon the freedom of politicians.

There were the critical "traditional" horrors in Congress to look into and clean up; the lobbying stranglehold on Washington; and then a lot more ...

The people were ready. They were tired of Watergate but equally enraged at the corruption. And, after the Vietnam War, its humiliations, the black revolt, the youth revolt, and now Watergate, they were psychologically willing to look at American institutions and at themselves and face reality; tragedy has a way of breaking through layers of brainwash; at least for a while the somnambulist is awakened by the shock. And in that time, the public needed to take a close hard look at itself, at the aspirations that media had ingrained into it, at work and play. In a Democracy, only the public can conduct house-cleaning and personal hygiene.

But who was to inform the public? Media? Politicians? The cosmetic rituals of "Where Did We Go Wrong?" had been conducted. Now the Power Cartel was ready to move on.

People had the power to cause Change. And there was the medium of Television whose airwaves were owned by the people, with the greatest power of any medium known to mankind. But television broadcasting belonged to Special Interests, and despite all the fault-finding that commercial TV was periodically subjected to, because it was chic to do so, commercial TV continued to dominate Americans and to be the most influential power in their lives. Despite the criticism among segments for its "bias" against Nixon, it is significant that commercial Television was by now the most influential and *respected* public institution. The most recent of the on-going Roper Studies had shown that Television ranked highest (71%) among all public institutions, far *ahead* of the Church.

Ostensibly, Big Business regimentation was to ease in some ways now, but in the real emotional and psychological sense, it remained as much if not more so; because people, men and the many women who now entered the arena of Standard Operating Procedures, were convinced that the superficial changes now made were about all that

was necessary, or at least all that could presently be expected. And yet, America at play — in sports, in the cultural pursuits in what media called the “cultural explosion” — were as much, if not more, dominated by Big Business value system as they were at work. So successful was this inculcation of Big Business value system among the American masses, that each year Big Money in the leisure business was bigger than ever. We must examine the trends set, to understand why the public could not be the Great Reformer in the world’s most powerful Democracy.

But we must first look a little closer at that other august arm of Government, the 535 people elected by the public to safeguard its rights and its wellbeing: the Congress. It worked in wondrous ways — but not quite the way text books said it did. And we must understand why textbook simplistic rules no longer applied to the American economy. The OPEC price hikes had created problems in many industries and in many countries which relied heavily on imported oil. But the real problem with the American economy was now more complex; because that real problem would not be pinpointed, it would get more pronounced and more dangerous with each succeeding year.

## *"Where Did We Go Wrong?"*

### (i)

With a public in trauma, yet chastened by recent upheavals, there was much that could have been done by way of reform. "Ceaseless vigilance is the price of liberty," said the old saw, and having glimpsed the extent of corruption in the system, and angered by its dimensions, the public though exhausted, was clearly ready to use the democratic process for a real clean-up.

Against that enormous clout of the masses, however, was the unfathomed might of the Power Cartel, already at work to gradually return the public to the old, unquestioning adulation of institutions; it had to be gradual, skillful, using every turn of events to its advantage in this process. There was a clear, and important difference between the objectives of the various power groups that comprised the Power Cartel and what would be the natural desire of governing institutions in any nation to set public mood back to its everyday course after major national traumas. It was clearly not enough for the Power Cartel to have the public return to a natural progression of its development after Watergate, because this could have meant a possible merger of the general public, sickened by Watergate, to youth's earlier clamor for reforms in values and institutions. The Think Tanks at each power group were hard at work to contain this eventuality.

The time was ripe for change. And there were genuine, dedicated leaders available to make that change possible, with public backing — from politics, on Capitol Hill itself and out of it. No doubt such a grass roots movement would have brought forth more leaders from every walk of life — even media itself. It must not be forgotten that there were some in media at this time — talented though not celebrities — who would have contributed (as they had in their individual capacity and would in the future) to a movement for real change.

Of course it was expecting a lot from the public, already exhausted from recent traumas, to undertake this enormous task of overcoming the brainwash of a lifetime, with that media, especially the awesome power of TV, still dominant over it.

But the public did have the great good fortune of having the conduits between itself and the sincere reformers within the institutions. For instance, Ralph Nader, that amazing American phenomenon, had already proven himself to be the incorruptible, courageous and effective crusader for the people. Since 1965, when he had taken on the automobile industry, rejected that industry's attempts (and those of other corporations) to silence him with highly lucrative job offers, then won punitive damages over their attempts to spy and discredit him, Nader had moved on, using those court-awarded funds to set up a non-profit organization with a team of young,



dedicated assistants to monitor and report on Government corruption and to lead the fight for the consumers. He continued to lead a spartan life, turned down, then and later, all attempts by admirers to make him seek public office. He wanted to maintain his own credibility with the public by staying scrupulously clean, and the fact that all attempts to smear him, then and later, by the Power Cartel failed, was the ultimate proof of his pure dedication. It might not be possible to agree with Nader in all respects, but no one could doubt his dedication, his honesty and his ability, with the public behind him, to expose corruption. An Ivy League graduate and a lawyer, Nader went after facts. He did not merely criticize, he offered solutions.

During the youth disturbances and during Watergate, public support for Nader and the consumer movement had increased substantially. But the public was hypnotized by TV, and after the announcement of the OPEC oil price hike in Nov. '73, to take effect in 1975, media's forecast economic doom — wild inflation and recession, even, said TV almost hourly, a possible depression. Naturally, Big Business obliged much ahead of time. The public with grim memories of the Great Depression, was terrified. Big Business — and some in media — had always claimed that consumer advocates were tying up Big Business and retarding economic progress. The public did not now want to take any chances for the economy to get worse. The appeal of Nader-style movements began to fade quickly. TV replaced such movements with its own advocates on local TV stations. Some were undoubtedly sincere, such as Betty Furness. But significantly, over the future years, the one TV consumer advocate who became the most prominent was David Horowitz; he talked flamboyantly, almost as a politician would, but his "crusades" were generally gimmicky, were never directed towards the big corporations; more often than not, his message was "you get what you pay for".

Commercial TV's discussions on Watergate and "where did we go wrong?" had been many and exhaustive. But they were not action-oriented. What they conveyed mostly was that despite all the time and effort spent in discussion there was really not much one could do, without a major upheaval which might jeopardize the entire System. And that was dangerous. The System worked, said TV, over and over again. It had got the Bad Guys out in Watergate.

No doubt, at least some of the TV experts were sincere. But by its very nature, commercial TV was not geared to solve serious national problems or even point to unpleasant facts as the cause. To point the finger at itself and at the public was unthinkable. What was more in line with its standard policy was public flattery: to review, then emphasise that the public had suffered greatly through all the Watergate corruptions, that "only in America" would the public have the ability, the determination, the sophistication to pursue Bad Guys and remove them. The public liked this flattery and commiseration. The natural consequence was that the public (at least the vast majority of it) complacent and in self-pity, evolved to the belief that all aspects of reform had been thoroughly considered, but nothing much could be done. In that frustrated state, one had to learn to defend oneself against usurpation of one's rights: "if you can't lick 'em, join 'em"; fragmented sub-groups — based upon ethnic, socio-economic, geographic segments of the public — became popular. The book *Looking after Number 1* became a runaway best seller and soon the hallmark of the age. The 1970s were to be dubbed the "me-first" decade.

Even to older Americans, whose youth had been conditioned to accept gangster control of politics, police and elite society, a "me-first" attitude made so much more sense than the current youth reform idealism; with the experience of their years, many

of them said you simply learn to accept corruption in politics. Many (though by no means all) had not even understood what the fuss had been all about in Watergate.

The turn towards deliberate selfishness was not even self-conscious as in the past; it was backed with the rationale of an abused public who was now exploring the best way to defend itself. Even media said so. Media had already established that through The New Morality, the Watergate proceedings, the emerging "cultural explosion" and the "tennis explosion", the American public was reaching a new high in human sophistication; in this milieu then, "looking after number one" was not narrow selfishness, but the consequence of sophisticated awareness.

In this new sophistication, politics and reform were boring, to be dealt with cynically, in flip phrases which media commentators provided in profusion, especially before national elections. Now, those among the public who sought some action among politicians soon set up one-issue lobbies of their own. Voting for a politician could depend on his or her endorsement of that issue, to the virtual exclusion of other considerations. This "me-first" social phenomenon had far-reaching effects upon American society and future political events in American history.

In fact, there was critical and long-overdue reform needed, with regard to Presidential powers, the Military and Secret Services, the role of the unelected Cabinet, the legal system; the corrupting power of lobbies, the Congress's own corruption, the corrupting syndrome of political advertising.

The nation needed more than ever to understand the real, underlying problems with the economy, that were never discussed, and consequently would lead to more problems.

Above all, it needed to understand that virtual monopoly of the power of TV in commercial hands was devastating the nation in innumerable ways, and that action of reform to set things right, even at this very late date, might still be possible. The lethal power of the medium itself had to be carefully studied, how it could be used for the betterment of society, and not to perpetuate the Age of Mediocrity.

The vestiges of public yearning, seeking "morality in government", were to last just barely long enough to elect Jimmy Carter, then faded fast; much before that the "me-first" attitude was taking over.

And, curiously, that "me-first" mood was exactly where the Power Cartel wanted Americans to be. Fragmented groups were weaker, and much easier to deal with; they did not seek reform so much as try to use the present structure for their own benefit. Politicians could study segments and promise to be different things to different groups. The middle income masses would not be concerned so much with tax loopholes; many of them, with hopes of one day becoming extremely rich, would prefer to keep those loopholes available. Elitist images, if properly conveyed, would draw all Americans to Op-Con values with even greater fervor; a skillfully slanted Americana — which included Big Business, Military and Pride in America — would provide greater emotional surge towards those values.

And, if in the "me-first" attitude, military build-up could be more easily accepted when associated with national economic growth, and with jobs, and if the public was convinced it could not cause any dangers to itself, there could be an end to the anti-military and anti-war sentiment, very soon.

We shall see how this was to evolve; but for now, we might take a brief look at Capitol Hill, at the legislatures elected by the public to safeguard their rights and institute the necessary changes; we must look at the economy and where it stood after Mr. Nixon, and what should have been done to correct its course. And we must also



review another unpopular subject — perhaps the least popular of all: the problems in public attitudes, *cultural* changes that were necessary, even critical, instead of the “me-first” phenomenon.

## (ii)

Media told its audiences that Americans were the most sophisticated and politically aware; facts showed, however, that there was an enormous void in voter knowledge, a void that increased as media concentrated on trivialities about politics. By now 65% of adult Americans *admitted* to deriving their news mainly from T.V. (soon it was 70%). Magazines and newspapers of prominence folded every year or two, while the surviving print media noted their lessons; they patterned their news content to the capsule or “telegraphic” brevity of TV, and sought to enhance interest with sex, lifestyle tid-bits, horoscopes, gossips and the like. It was Style over Substance, and gaining by the week.

And so while a few genuinely worthy men and women managed to get elected, increasingly those who could afford it and had the right backing made it to Congress and often stayed there with their constituents being unaware, not only how their representatives voted, but who they were. “Public Opinion”, a Nader study conducted in 1976 found only 19% of those interviewed could correctly identify three basic branches of Government (Executive, Legislature, Judiciary); one out of three respondents did know the name of their Congressman but less than 10% knew the Congressman’s position on major issues;\* in 1974, after youth awareness had presumably made great strides, a poll taken to have the public evaluate the American Bill of Rights (without telling them what it was) found a vast majority strongly opposed to its provisions, and many convinced it was some kind of communist manifesto. In 1976, prior to the impending visit to the U.S. of France’s President D’Estang, a Harris poll revealed the astonishing fact that 34% of Americans did not know France had played a critical (or even any role) in America’s independence. But everyone had by then heard of the Carter smile. And just about everyone knew the names of all the characters on famous TV programs.

In the meanwhile, some of the elected and others seeking the nation’s top office, revealed their own caliber periodically. The nomination of Justice Carswell by Mr. Nixon to the Supreme Court had been strongly challenged in the Congress, on the grounds that Carswell’s scholastic background and his career as a judge showed him to be, at best, mediocre. Upon which Senator Hrunrah of Nebraska, an ardent Nixon supporter, came up with the argument that a lot of Americans were mediocre. *What is wrong with having mediocrity represented on the Supreme Court?*, he asked. Another Nixon supporter, Senator William Scott of Virginia, when questioned by reporters in 1974 about some recent disclosures factually linking Nixon with the illegalities, came up with this supreme argument: “Don’t bother me with facts”, he said.

And then there was the other Presidential candidate, George Wallace, who had garnered 13.5% of national votes in 1968, and was evidently expected to do even better in 1976. On a visit to Europe on a “fact-finding” tour in 1975, he angrily lectured a group of foreign reporters on a stance that got him a lot of support among home voters (and which he no doubt expected, when reported in the U.S. would

\* At re-election campaigns, the incumbent usually stressed what he had done or tried to do for his district, while his opponent stressed what he had not done for it.



increase that support): the ingratitude of the world who had taken to criticizing America after all that America had done for the world. At one point in the news conference he singled out Bo Holmquist, a Swedish correspondent, for chastisement on Swedish criticism of America on the War in Vietnam. Wallace asked the astonished Holmquist why the Swedes had not objected or criticized America when America had come out to save Sweden from German occupation in World War II. "You thought I didn't know they (the German army) marched through Sweden, did you?" Wallace was later informed of course that *Sweden had been neutral in World War 2 and, therefore, no German army had ever marched through it.*

Men of great distinction, and proven ability and integrity, found themselves defeated in Congress when they thwarted major power groups; Senator Wayne Morse was one; and Senator William Fulbright, with perhaps the most prominent and respected career in Washington was also ousted. Fulbright was not only to lose his Senate seat but to be virtually blacked out of all media coverage (and the public quite unaware why he had lost either). On the other hand, there were many Congressmen (the few women when elected had to be very conscientious) who were more than willing not to be in media's eye, and therefore, out of public vision. Propped up by one powerful lobby or more, they got their necessary campaign funds, and effective advertising campaign. Once in Congress they would be members of at least one sub-committee (there were enough sub-committees by now to accommodate all 435 Congressmen and 100 Senators). They could stay away or merely doze through the proceedings, making sure that their staff sent periodic "newsletters" to their constituents back home.

Senator Fulbright was ousted by Arkansas voters because of the intense campaign that said Fulbright was too involved in international affairs and therefore, not concerned enough about Arkansas. The less conscientious Congressmen had a much easier time and faced no such problems. All they needed to do was show "the folks back home" through newsletters and every opportunity at publicity that they cared for their own state. As long as they did that, by whatever means, ethical or unethical, they were safe to pursue whatever Special Interest directives they found most beneficial to their own career and pocket book. "Your representative owes you not his industry but his judgement", Edmund Burke said in 1774. "And he betrays instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion ..... You chose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, *he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of Parliament.*" Americans, however, had been conditioned to feel that the official elected from their State best served that State and its people by restricting himself to getting money and projects for it. The attitude allowed, even encouraged exploiters to use fair and unfair means to get things for their constituencies. It was through such attitudes and their exploitation that men like Senator La Follette, considered one of the most talented men in the Senate had been defeated in 1950 by the infamous Joe McCarthy; McCarthy convinced Wisconsinians that by not campaigning more and by staying in Washington (La Follette was sponsoring important changes in Congress at the time) La Follette cared more for national not Wisconsin's interests.

Re-election was usually easier. A campaign story could be built up over the two years. American speech-making laws were different from those in most other countries.\*

\* Senator Edwards Brooke is quoted as observing once that if the word 'distinguished' were eliminated legislators could save 10% of their time.

A Congressman did not have to speak like an orator or indeed speak at all. He almost always had speeches written for him by aides or lobby groups; after having the speech written for him, he did not even have to speak it. He could merely have the speech entered into the Congressional Records, from which no one could ever tell if it was read in Congress or not. It had become a standard practice, or as some Congressmen claimed, "a tradition". The fillerbuster was another American "tradition", whereby a Congressman (House or Senate) could, singly or with others take the floor when a Bill he did not like was in discussion and speak for hours and days — on any subject. Some brought novels, others the Bible, newspapers, magazines. The idea was to bore fellow members to tears and into surrendering the Bill. Op-Con Senator, Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, held the honor of having a record — 24 hours and 18 mins. in 1957.

Having satisfied the requisites of the power groups that elected them, and with adequate provisions to provide material for their home constituency before election to ensure re-election (always easier the second time), Congressmen had another advantage for the second term. The lobby they may have helped could be a very powerful supportive force. The seniority system then took over so that in the normal course the average Congressman, after a few years automatically became Chairman of a sub-Committee, with life-long security and increasing power, if he chose to use it. Some of the more ambitious proceeded to use their opportunities to the fullest; others merely treated their terms as part-time; yet others had come to be known on Capitol Hill as "Phantom Congressmen". A flurry of younger Congressmen and women were now (after Watergate) to cause some changes especially in the seniority system, but the inherent problems remained.

There were, of course, House and Senate members who were highly motivated, of impeccable integrity and very hard working. But it was hard for such men and women to be effective, and it was often possible for them to be removed. Advertising campaigns required heavy expenditure. Soon, some Senators had to spend several million dollars even to be re-elected. Those favoring powerful lobbies had no problem.

Sometimes, funds from the general electorate were more generous than at other times. Usually, the elected official who had created a satisfactory media image got the most generous support, i.e. one who had media coverage and therefore *media blessing*.

There was that grim irony in the political set-up in Washington in the post-Watergate era. Corrupt elected officials continued to get as much money as they needed for their re-election, and successfully returned to support the lobbies and Special Interests that fed them. On the other hand, there was Ralph Nader, having organized a non-profit Public Citizen operation, proven to have no personal ambitions or strings, determined to provide as much information for the public as possible on the voting pattern and Congressional procedures so that it could vote with knowledge and understanding. Despite well-qualified volunteers and experts taking minimum remuneration, the Nader operations ran into constant criticism from Special Interests, some Congressmen and media, and as a result had to fight hard for the upkeep of their non-profit operations (membership was just \$15 a year).

According to the Nader *Public Citizen* Report, of 1973-74, of the nation's 1760 daily newspapers, 73% did not have a Washington correspondent; 99% of TV stations and 96% of Radio Stations around the country also did not have one. What served to enlighten the constituencies around the nation, therefore, was whatever press releases said, and what the TV networks and major newspapers said. The power to inform

and enlighten was within very few hands. We need to look briefly at some examples of various aspects of Capitol Hill operations, to understand how critically dangerous this was.

The three TV and Radio networks and reps of the wire services, some of the major newspapers and a few of the commercial TV and Radio combines had their full time reporters in Washington. This "Press Corps" and their editorial supervisors had, therefore, the power to choose what news to report. Even without the influence of lobbyists and Special Interest policy makers, the reporters themselves could be ruled by their own views and preferences with great impact. The manner in which some of the important top correspondents, especially the TV network reporters, were wooed by the elected officials and their aides, had to be seen to be believed. In Washington, it was by now standard practice never to rub the networks and major dailies the wrong way — unless an elected official was certain of massive public support on an issue. Even the most dedicated of Congressmen and Senators had to follow this practice. The more ambitious and the less scrupulous went to great lengths for this purpose. Many times, what the public saw in a thirty second segment featuring one Congressman on the TV evening news took many hours of painstaking planning by the elected official and his aides; first in selecting a stance that would augment the official's image the right way; next to decide the location and the words that would be "saleable" to the major media reporters, especially one of the three TV networks. When major media identified with the stance, it was much easier, because media reporters helped too. Next the setting had to be arranged, (often with the help and direction of the compliant TV reporter and his crew), especially the difficult setting of a seemingly "accidental" interview. But once it was all done, it had enormous value. That nationwide coverage had far more in prestige value than all the newsletters and even the many local TV and radio interviews in one's home state. The image was wholly different. Importantly, as the Ralph Nader study showed, most of the TV, Radio and print media around the country picked up on what was provided by the major media. The publicity value of having the major media reporters on your side was incalculable. The leaders in the Congress and Senate did not have to worry as much, but even they needed to do a lot of wooing if they had some issue on which they wanted to get national coverage. There were 435 Congressmen and 100 Senators. And there were only three TV networks with just one 30 minutes evening news slot each, of which only 22 minutes was actually news (the rest being advertising commercials) and within those 22 minutes international and all other news was to be provided, not the least of which was the highlight, beamed at the White House. The power to "inform and enlighten" was in a very few hands in media and the core of this power was held by the three commercial TV networks, mainly in those 22 minutes.\*

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In 1846, friends collected \$200 for Abraham Lincoln's first try at Congress. At the end of the campaign, he returned \$199.25 of it. He had dutifully spent 75 cents on a barrel of cider for farm workers. In what Mr. Thayer called *The Golden Age of*

\* Foreign correspondents usually reflected American major media view point. It was safer professionally for them and easier too. Many geniously believed that American journalists were the experts on America and should be followed for that reason.



*Boodle*, corruption among politicians reigned supreme. They worked for Big Business and they made no bones about it. Boies Penrose, a Republican Senator of the time, from Pennsylvania, one of the more openly corrupt, had summed it all up best, once in talking with Big Business representatives "I believe in the division of labor. You send us to Congress, we pass laws under which you make money..... and out of your profits you further contribute to our campaign funds to send us back again to pass more laws to enable you to make more money". It was simple yet effective. At least on one proven occasion, Standard Oil paid him \$25,000.

But by today's standards of political advertising — and pay offs — it is a negligible sum of course. In a concise, yet highly informative book *Who Runs Congress?* (1972) three of Ralph Nader's "Raiders", Mark Green, James Fallows and David Zwick (with massive research by colleagues) had compiled an interesting important source for voter enlightenment. "The real thrust behind skyrocketing costs, however, is television advertising.... As recently as 1952, the total spent in national (political) campaigns was \$140 million (according to the Citizen's Research Foundation) .... in 1964 it was an estimated \$200 million. But only four years later, in 1968, the figure had risen by 50% to \$300 million. More than any other factor Television was the cause." Of course, these numbers have since been dwarfed. Mr. Nixon officially spent \$55 million in 1972.

To get enough money to be elected (if you were honest) and to get as much over and above that (if you were not), required massive support. In practice, this usually meant the financial support of powerful and wealthy lobbies and Big Business. Senator Russell Long (himself hardly free of conflict of interest) once admitted on the Senate floor in 1967, "It would be my guess that 95% of campaign funds at the congressional level are derived from businessmen. At least 80% of this comes from men [with worth] .... exceeding a quarter of a million dollars". In *Fat Cats and Democrats* Professor Williams Domhoff is more conservative at least with regard to Big Business contributions. He estimates that about 55% of party money came from Corporation sources. Republican candidates got between 60-70% of this. Corporation bosses however, were themselves more than willing to get their staff to "contribute voluntarily" thereby adding to the Big Business contributions, in yet another way. Such "voluntary contributions" (as those who have worked in close contact with top management must know from personal experience) could consist of carefully worded memos and verbal arm-twisting. *Who Runs Congress?* reports some of that. For instance: "When seafaring men might use a goon squad, Texaco uses an interoffice memorandum. 'We must as individual citizens support those candidates who understand and appreciate the validity of our position' .... It (the Texaco memo) closes with a request that employees contribute \$5 a month or \$60 for the entire year ... Sterling Drug Inc., applying a means test asks its 525 executives who earn more than \$15,000 per year to give at least one half of one percent of salary, up to a ceiling of \$200. 'Specifically we are asking for a voluntary contribution from you' the letter says, 'for a political fund to be allocated to those legislatures .... whose .... election is important to our industry and to Sterling Drug Inc.' (emphasis in original) .... other corporations, more considerate .... add bonuses to executive pay checks with the understanding that the money will be passed on to a candidate. Still others — like the Union Oil Company and the Cleveland based defence (Pentagon supplier) firm Thompson-Ramos-Woolridge (TRW) — avoid the middleman by simply deducting an arranged amount for 'campaign contributions' from the pay checks of cooperating employees. The Public Affairs Council, whose members include two hundred

corporate titans, is so struck by the plan that it is working for the day when the nation's thousand biggest companies will all have automatic campaign contributions."

Attempting to investigate "undercover payments", however, journalist Walter Pincus, of the Nader investigative team, was able to trace in 1970 such undercover political programmes to General Electric, U.S. Steel, Proctor & Gamble, Union Carbide etc. but it was very difficult; "to track one of Union Carbide, six researchers had to spend ten weeks looking through reports filed by individual candidates and cross names of hundreds of contributors and lists of corporate executives".

Among the many modes of payment, on the sly, to political candidates, was that in kind. "Boeing [Corporation] recognizing a politician who had earned its support, did just that for [Senator Henry] Scoop Jackson during his doomed run for the presidency." (*Who Runs Congress?*)

Of course a very important form of both financial and election help or hindrance was supplied by the Washington lobbies. By 1950, lobbying had become a "major industry". By the early 1970s, there were over 5000 full-time lobbyists in Washington, "One estimate is that eight out of ten of the nation's thousand largest corporations already have representatives in Washington and each year at least a dozen new companies set up permanent beachheads in the Capitol" said the Nader group in 1972. Other estimates — especially in future years — estimated lobbyists to nearer 10,000. Lobbyists not only provided campaign and other contributions, but also massive data — sometimes entire speeches — to the elected officials. There were some lobbies far more powerful than others. Citizen's groups and environmentalists were now becoming consolidated and aware that lobbying was the only way to win Congressional support. Despite the efforts of many influential members in that citizen's lobby and those who sided with them in Congress, such fundamental essentials as a recognized consumer voice — a Consumer Protection Agency — was repeatedly thwarted by both Congress and the Nixon White House. On the other hand, there were the very powerful lobbyists — the Labor Unions COPE (Committee on Political Education), SIU (Seafarers International Union); then there was the mighty National Association of Manufacturers (representing many of Big Business interests collectively, aside from individual representation) and the emerging elite of BB lobbies — the Business Roundtable; the American Medical Association's AMPAC was formidable. Even more powerful than them all — for varied reasons — were the National Rifle Association (NRA); the U.S. Defence Dept. Lobby (Military Armaments Lobby), with the total "liaison" staff reported in 1970 as being 312 (Defence), 95 (Army), 67 (Navy). There were the very powerful Oil Lobby and the Tobacco Lobby, but by now, among the most powerful — if not the most powerful — was the Zionist Lobby, including among others four major Jewish lobby organisations — the American Zionist Association, the Association of Presidents, B'nai B'rith and the American Zionist Congress — all with the tributaries throughout the nation and the Western world. With their special ties with movies, TV and print, the Zionists could make or break just about any politician.

With concentrated power among the very powerful lobbies, had come the ability to create ad hoc combines, which helped not only in electing the "right" candidate but in having the uncooperative, even a top senator "removed", as Senator Fulbright was soon to find despite his own reportedly close ties with the Oil Lobby.\* For the most

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\* Fulbright himself graciously insists he lost in 1974 because the Arkansas voters decided against him and that was all that matters.



part then, powerful segments of the powerful lobbies did not have to spread themselves too thin across all the elected 535 members. Lobbyists sought out for concentrated favor just those officials who were on sub-committees of direct importance. "The political arm of General Foods (Corporation) — the 'North Street Good Government Group' — did not squander its money on Armed Services committee members. Instead it aimed at three men whose influence on questions dear to General Foods equalled that of a hundred other Congressmen combined; three powerful members of the House Agricultural Committee. The bankers group, Bank PAC, similarly excluded anyone not on committees which affect the industry"\*.

In 1970, 79% of the \$50,000 (Congressman Wayne) Aspinall reported he spent came from *outside* his (home) district of Colorado. The reason was that Aspinall was Chairman of the House Interior Committee, and, as such, could do a great deal to determine the profit rates in the mining, timber and oil industries. Contribution to his campaign came from all the major industrial corporations across the country. Even during the zenith of "anti-war" public sentiments, ways could be found to get uncooperative legislatures to agree. A Bill for one expenditure which very few would vote against would be tied along with another, far less appealing. "A member (of Congress) who voted against a major Bill to fund the Vietnam War that also contained a small provision for aid to Israel could be labelled as (Senator) George McGovern discovered — 'Anti-Israel' by an opponent";\* answering the charge is difficult, because issues quickly become complicated beyond the comprehension of the electorate, especially when the charge and the defence are condensed by newspapers and TV broadcasters. Thus, the unfortunate Senator found himself branded at least temporarily in the minds of many voters, as anti-Israel through media, until he could prove by special effort and behavior of strong pro-Israel behavior next time, that he was not a renegade. McGovern received by far, fewest Jewish votes in 1972 than any Democratic Presidential candidate in recent times (until Carter, of course).

More Congressmen and Congresswomen who could be a problem had to be put where it was safest. Newly elected Herman Badillo (Puerto Rican) and Shirley Chisholm (a black) both from New York City were relegated to the Agricultural Committee, until they protested (Badillo quipped "There isn't any crop in my district except marijuana").

With real, committed public support, a lot could have been done to reform Congress. There were those in it who had, for years, fought for reform. Now there were young men and women entering Congress charged with idealism. Many of them would soon fall in line with the existing "system" — there was much in it that could seduce — but others would not.

And there were, in addition to the Nader group, other watchdogs over Congress. Common Cause, for instance, a new non-profit organization would remain resolute in the public interest over future years, despite public lethargy. Also, following Watergate revelations, investigative reporting was very popular — for a while — and that brought more evidence of corrupt practices that needed to be dealt with, not just in the White House but, very much, on Capitol Hill as well.

By then a lot of other types of revelations had emerged. Corruption and bribery for instance. Nearly 125 Corporations and their chief executives had pleaded guilty to illegal contributions; Watergate was over, and Nixon and his aides purged from the White House, but the period was to show more clearly why so many in Congress had

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\* *Who Runs Congress?*



sided with Nixon for so long, why not only Republicans but some Democrats had attempted to brush aside the charges of corruption against Nixon, with the argument that some corruption was traditional. Massive contributions to individual Congressmen had also come to public notice and therefore, subject to legal prosecution. More was to come in the next two years. Major U.S. corporations, such as Lockheed and Boeing were now to be found, in the rarefied post-Watergate milieu, to have practiced bribery on a massive scale abroad, in various Asian and European countries. Many multinationals were found guilty.\* The multinationals, while admitting to the Securities and Exchange Commission that they had been in the practice of bribing foreign government officials, pleaded that in the Asian countries in particular, corruption in high places was so prevalent that if one did not pay, one did not get business. It sounded right to many. But no one explained how this could be justified in the light of what media — at Republican prodding — now called "Koreagate"; Tong Sen Park, a Korean millionaire and rice dealer, had created massive support for his rice deals by putting many U.S. Congressmen on his payroll, and otherwise entertaining them lavishly. The Power Cartel, sensing another national catharsis which would only lead to another of the irksome moral phases, quickly got commercial TV and other major media to highlight the distinct possibility that Park was a secret agent of Korea who had shrewdly compromised American officials to blackmail them, on behalf of Korea!

This was presumably aimed to draw ire against the Koreans and away from the "victimised" Congressmen. Threats and arm-twisting of the Korean government with Dollar Diplomacy (even the cut-off of "Food for Peace") enabled Park to be "extradited" to the U.S. from Korea (Park was a Korean citizen); televised hearings were conducted of the accused Park; no sensational links with the Korean Government Secret Service however, could be established and three Congressmen were finally prosecuted and found guilty of receiving bribes from a business man.

Excesses, especially blatant excesses, had over the past few years, also caused some Congressmen to be discovered, and despite the help of their colleagues in some instances, they had been either convicted or — because of resultant publicity — lost re-election. But for the most part, a lid could be placed upon scandals and make them fizzle out. Since the mid-1960, some Congressmen had been too blatant or too overconfident and careless. Some had been found guilty of misappropriation of funds, others of taking bribes, falsifying documents, provable involvement with the Crime Syndicate, one even of murder. Many in the old Nixon-McCarthy tradition said they were the victims of communist plots ("an attempted frame-up by leftists" cried Congressman Dowdy). Senator Gurney of Florida, an ardent Nixon supporter in the Senate Watergate hearings, when prosecuted on various counts of corruption soon after he made similar claims; he was to be convicted in Court (the verdict later overturned). Others had deeply emotional following among the "folks" but had relied too heavily on it to avoid prosecution.\*\* Adam Clayton Powell openly and fearlessly used public money on his holiday jaunts with girl friends during Congress Sessions,

\* Lockheed acknowledged in 1976 paying bribes to various top government officials in foreign lands — ranging from Netherlands (to the Prince himself) to Western Germany, Japan and Iran. The chairman of Lockheed had to resign. Boeing was later to admit payments as well. Westinghouse admitted it and ITT was forced later to make similar admissions.

\*\* *I believe in God and Senator Dodd and keeping' ol' Castro down*, sang country singer Phil Ochs.

convinced that Harlem would never turn on their star Black Congressman; and for several terms he was right.

According to *Who Runs Congress?*, five Congressmen or top aides went to jail in this period. Two were severely reprimanded by their chambers; one was even re-elected after conviction on misappropriation. It was not an isolated case. In later years, a Congressman from Pennsylvania was not only to win re-election while an apparently iron-clad case on bribery and fraud against him was in the courts, but he was considered a hero by his constituency because they felt whatever — if anything — he had done, he had done right by them (he always fought for economic gains for his constituency). Another Congressman was to be re-elected by a vast majority *after* his conviction. But while these convictions and censures might seem like a “purge”, most Congressmen stood together and overcame criminal charges on their colleague with their power.\* For the most part, illegalities were obscured in a maze of bureaucracy. The House Ethics Committee was established *for the first time* in 1967. In three years it had conducted just two preliminary hearings.\*\* Many powerful Congressmen could well afford not to be too blatant — they were fully secure being “conservative” and happy without “making waves”. “Conflict of interest” was almost a tradition.

In 1962, Senator John Sparkman, then heir apparent (later chairman) of the Senate Banking Committee was allowed \$10,500 in shares, at preferred terms, by a new bank receiving charter in Washington. Congressman Seymour Halpern was able to get \$10,000 in unsecured loans from banks in 1969 even though “his committee was considering banking legislation at the time”, according to *Who Runs Congress?*.

In 1969, there were fourteen members (of Congress) who owned more than \$5,000 stock in radio and television stations, and eight more were owners or principal investors in them. According to the Congressional Quarterly, “Congressman Clarence Brown of Ohio held majority stock in a broadcasting station — and sat on the House sub-committee regulating broadcasting .... (Senator) James Eastland, the powerful Mississippi President pro tempore of the Senate, and his wife, received \$159,000 in 1971 in agricultural subsidies” (i.e., a kind of welfare support from the Federal government to farmers, not to grow certain crops so as to maintain a high enough market price); “at the same time, he sits on the (Senate) Agricultural Committee and votes against ceilings on farm subsidies”.\*\*\*

Senator George Smathers of Florida, planned his career as a lobbyist after retiring from the Senate; it seems that the Defence Dept. had a multimillion dollar contract with Aerodex, a Florida firm which it intended to cancel, because of what the Air Force called “Poor quality work which was endangering the Air Force pilots and aircraft”. According to *Newsday* newspaper, Smathers managed with his influence to have the Defence contract kept going. In 1969, therefore, when Smathers retired, he was made director of Aerodex, got \$435,000 of stock for just \$20,000, a \$25,000 a year retainer for his law firm — all from the grateful Aerodex Corporation. Smathers also

\* Generalized criticism of colleagues was acceptable but not anything direct and specific. In the mid-Sixties, Senator William Fulbright made just that mistake. Other Senators did not mind his usual charges that the ‘military industrial complex’ influenced policy in Vietnam but they were unhappy when he named Senators Richard Russell, “Scoop” Jackson and Mendell Rivers as its operatives.

\*\* In 1980, the Congress was suddenly to become morally outraged and not only condemn but oust some members — in the ABSCAM circus. But the primary objective of that very strange FBI investigation, as we shall see later, would appear to have been to frighten Senators and Congressmen away from the Arabs.

\*\*\**Who Runs Congress?*

set himself up as a general lobbyist. The move from Congress to lobbyists — and vice versa — was very common now. "Nearly every big lobby has at least one (and often more) ex-member of Congress on its staff".\*

Senator Robert Kerr of Kentucky, another rich oilman who decided on oil tax laws in the Senate Finance Committee, is reported to have said, "If everyone abstained on the grounds of personal interests, I doubt if we could get a quorum in the United States Senate on any subject".

The more dedicated among the elected and career public servants had the even greater problem with balanced justice because of the current powers vested in the President and his non-elected Cabinet.

*Who Runs Congress?* (published 1972) was written *before* Watergate disclosures. Yet the writers knew — as so many in media knew — about the Nixon White House strong-arm tactics for Big Business, especially for those who contributed heavily. William Powell, President of Mid-America Dairymen said in a letter some years earlier to one of his associates "since the sincere and safe voice of the dairy farmer is no match for the jungle of hard currencies put in the campaign funds of the politicians, by the vegetable, farm interests, labor, steel, airlines, and others" the Dairymen, he said, should do likewise. They poured \$50,000 into Congressional elections in 1970, and by 1971 several Congressmen leaped to pass a bill to make a price increase on raw milk mandatory. The Dairymen's price demands were just. As in so much of farm products, the small and the medium size farmer lost out a great deal because so much of the profits off the retail price went to the big distributors and the big retailers. But the Executive Department balked at the increase. Nixon's Secretary of Agriculture announced on March 12, 1972 that the price of milk would not go up. But the dairymen laid out a commitment of \$225,000 towards Nixon's election fund, of which they had now paid \$35,000. "It got quick results. The next day, President Nixon invited sixteen dairy and farm representatives to the White House .... The meeting with the President was described later by William Powell, the President of the Mid-America Dairymen, in a letter to one of his members: 'We dairymen can be a dominant group. On March 23, 1971, along with nine other dairy farmers, I sat in the Cabinet Room of the White House .... He (President Nixon) said, 'You people are my friends and I appreciate it.' Two days later an order came from the U.S. Department of Agriculture increasing the support price of milk .... which added from \$500 million to \$700 million to dairy farmers' milk checks. We dairy farmers cannot afford to overlook this kind of economic benefit. *Whether we like it or not, this is the way the system works!*' (italics added). The dairymen sent another check for \$45,000 on April 5, 1971, towards their commitment of \$225,000."\*

The impact of such moves was not lost on the experienced Congressmen. It was, therefore, not just for power or to "uphold the Constitution" but to convince contributors that they, the Congressmen, also wielded power to get things done, that Nixon's usurpation of the power of the Congress, was for many in that august body, adding economic injury to insult.

It was not an isolated case — even before all the Watergate disclosures. There were, aside from anything else, powers that a President could use through laws passed in the twentieth century, such as the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 which gave him the right to design the national budget for all of the Federal Government. He

\* *Who Runs Congress?*



could also control the spendings through his Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The Congress Appropriation Committee could review the budget. But the review required expertise and the best experts they usually had were the people who prepared the budget for the President. At the time, (especially with anti-War sentiments growing in the country) Congress occasionally questioned some of the provisions. Once, Defence experts rolled out a chart showing the relative strengths of the U.S. and Russian fleets. "A suspicious Congressman later discovered that the figures had been doctored to exaggerate the Pentagon claim that the Navy needed more ships. While the American fleet total had been reduced to take account of ships idle in port, the Russian total had not .... When Senator Proxiir began to press Budget Director Robert Mayo asking questions in the Defence (budget) request, Mayo loftily replied that the President's flexibility is better served by not getting into a debate on what is and what is not in the Defence budget". \*

Such "flexibility" was already used by the Nixon administration. The Secretary of Defence could use civilian funds for the military, if "security" made it necessary. The Foreign Assistance Act allowed 10% of the aid money provided for one country to be sent to another. President Nixon reportedly took advantage of all these loopholes when financing the Cambodian invasion of 1970. By the time he asked Congress for \$255,000,000 to pay for the project, he had already spent \$100,000,000 of it. Among other maneuvers the Joint Chiefs of Staff had advised Defence Secretary Laird in August 1971 to take \$52,000,000 from other programs, which he did.

At other times, other sources could be used. Louis Fisher (political scientist) estimated that "\$15-20,000,000,000 of appropriations, mainly for defence, is never even explained to Congress". And then there was the 'pipeline' — the remnants from 'fill-funding clauses' which allow the Defence Dept. to keep some of the money not spent in a year. Timothy Ingram of *Washington Monthly* estimated that during the Nixon regime, the Pentagon had \$50,000,000,000 in such "reserve". There is also the availability of declaring some of the Army's equipment "obsolete" and channelling it out, as the Army Chiefs had advised Secretary Laird to do in August 1971 (for Cambodia). Another way was to say that the cost of some approved weapon or plane being designed had become far greater, so that the "fixed" price contract was changed to "cost plus".

Big Business favorites received special attention, of course. A massive audit of IT&T (one of the largest group of companies in the world) was underway. In 1972, the FCC stopped the audit, claiming it was out of funds. Senator John Pastore fought back on this occasion by showing that the OMB had withheld \$1,800,000 from the Congressional allocation for this audit, and the audit had to be re-commenced. In 1971, the Environmental Protection Agency had developed a new set of guidelines that Big Business had to meet to control air pollution. Nixon's Commerce Secretary Maurice Stans (also head of Nixon's re-election committee and chief purveyor of election funds from Big Business) among other federal officials clamped down hard through OMB, with John Ehrlichman and Peter Flanigan (Nixon aides) applying even more pressure, reported Peter Bernstein of Newhouse News Service. The regulations were eased. In 1972, an EPA plan for cleaning the Great Lakes was squashed with equal power.

One more example may provide the classic set-up of how blatantly a President

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\* *Who Runs Congress?*

could support Big Business, even *without* the urging of Big Business lobbies. Nixon, in public statements had urged Congress to pass a Clean Air Bill. A few months later, the Clean Air Bill of 1971 was passed by Congress. Now Nixon worked to kill it. "The law's sponsors, notably (Senator) Edmund Muskie had packed a series of tough clauses. In an extraordinary display of concern (on behalf of) .... corporations of America, the President's staff had held a pep rally to encourage private interests to fight the Bill".\* Later Douglas Trussel, Vice-President of the powerful Big Business lobby, the National Association of Manufacturers, said, "The notion that somehow industry got to the administration and pushed them [into opposing the Bill] is really the reverse of what happened. The administration *took the initiative*, and many corporate executives were ignorant of what was going on". "At the November 4 meeting (in 1971) when seven trade representatives came to the White House, .... Presidential aide (Richard) Fairbanks made what one trade representative called 'an incredible speech'. His (Fairbank's) pitch was, 'We fought a lone battle over here on this bill. Where the hell were you guys when we needed you?'"\*

The Presidential staff and nominations had expanded greatly under Mr. Nixon; Big Business provided many aides from corporations, ad agencies, even independent business magnets. President Nixon's former congressional liaison, Bryce Harlow, had to leave his job as congressional liaison for Proctor & Gamble to come to the White House. When he left the administration he returned to P & G.

Despite its show of force in the nomination of Haynsworth and Carswell, Congress had generally approved Mr. Nixon's appointments without effort. "During Mr. Nixon's first term in office, Congress had to approve 72,635 appointments — most of them with only a few seconds deliberation".\* The continuing and spreading power of Mr. Nixon's own men in various Departments was soon very fearsome on Capitol Hill. The most feared, of course, were the White House aides. In the first three years alone of Mr. Nixon's presidency, the staff had grown from 1,766 to 2,206. The annual staff growth rate was four times what it had been under the Johnson administration. Even on information-gathering, Congress had a ridiculous handicap. It had for instance only 3-4 computers, whereas the Executive Branch had 1,000.

The network ownership and policy makers while at odds with Nixon, especially during Agnew's "Silent Majority" campaign, were still heavily linked with common interests and the Special Interests Power Cartel to Nixon, one of the pioneer members of that Cartel. When the highly popular *Smothers Brothers* programme became constantly critical of the Nixon administration and the "Establishment", CBS summarily cancelled the Show and Tom Smothers in particular was virtually blacklisted. When the CBS correspondent Dan Rather got carried away in the heat of anti-Nixon emotionalism and exchanged words with Nixon at one of the latter's rare press conferences, CBS removed Rather from Washington; Rather was soon properly docile and his subsequent commentaries and coverage was more and more on the "Conservative" slant. By the 1980s he was an ardent Op-Con.

Even media's trend with "investigative" reporting was to take a more popular Op-Con turn, later — towards the issue of Federal spending and welfare frauds — thereby earning and regaining the support of the Power Cartel. Media's tendency to expose corruption, after it was reasonably sure of popularity, was provable by past records themselves.

\* *Who Runs Congress?*



Watergate disclosures had been either ignored — even deplored — until it became clear that the disclosures by *The Washington Post* were of such magnitude that the country and the Congress would have to act — and commercial TV among others, was missing highly profitable coups. Media coverage, however, could spell the difference between action and inaction. When Congressman Kenneth Roberts held a series of revealing hearings on auto safety in 1956, the press ignored them and Congress passed the issue by. Nine years later i.e., in the aftermath of Ralph Nader's book and one-man crusade, to which publicity had to be given, Senate hearings on auto safety were nationally covered and Congress, in the glare of that publicity, passed the Automobile Traffic and Safety Act of 1966.

Fred Friendly, former President of CBS News, reveals in his book *Due To Circumstances Beyond Our Control* that he quit CBS when CBS took the Senate hearings in 1966 against the Vietnam War off the air and replaced them with re-runs of *I Love Lucy* (the anti-Vietnam war movement was not very strong then.). The Senate hearings on "Truth in Packaging" in 1966 was given short shift by the TV networks, said Nicholas Johnson, the outspoken President of the Federal Communications Commission (removed by Mr. Nixon) in his article in *TV Guide* July 5, 1969 "Could it be" he asks, "that such behavior reflects concern for the best interests of the top 50 Grocery Products advertisers who spent \$1,314,890,000 on TV in 1965?" As we have seen before, Ed Morrow and Fred Friendly had to fight hard to get the Morrow programmes against Senator Joe McCarthy on the air, and pay for advertising themselves from their own pockets. Soon that unique journalist's documentaries were to be dumped into the "cultural ghetto" of Sunday afternoons (so-called because of very limited audience size in that time-slot), replaced by a game show and finally off the air. Another "traditional" area of censorship by omission (or at best cryptic brevity), was practiced when government action occurred against major corporations who were also major advertisers. For instance, consider the occasional use by the Justice Department of whatever anti-trust laws there were. "The friendliness of television, radio and most of the press to IT&T was so great that there seems to have been no news coverage of this item of this case (against the IT&T) which was one of the most important anti-trust suits the government has ever undertaken and, in effect lost" said Prof. Skornia (*Television & Society*, 1965). The Government, or more correctly, the uncorrupted segment thereof, was to lose again to IT&T under the Nixon regime. Towards the end of the Johnson administration, the Justice Dept. had become more active than usual on anti-trust (monopolistic) practices. Despite its apparent desire to seem "liberal", media gave these actions little or no coverage. Justice Dept. succeeded in some actions, such as forcing the mighty Proctor & Gamble to divest itself of some of its subsidiaries (Clorox Co., Calgon Corp., etc.); but its moves against others like IT&T were, as we have seen, squashed under the new Attorney General John Mitchell and President Nixon, and barely reported by media.

If the public truly wanted a clean government and had ousted Nixon for that reason, it was critical to know what was happening in Congress and do something about it at the polls. But it never really tried.



the Embargo within a few weeks, OPEC then announced a price hike. The Arabs were said to be furious with the U.S. and some of its allies for their indiscriminate support of Israel.

And that price hike was to be most *fortunate* for American Big Business, its image and its fortunes. A brief look at the facts can explain that seemingly impossible paradox.

The Watergate investigations, the removal of Attorney-General Kliendienst, the "no contest" to the charges and resignation of Vice-President Agnew, had all tied in many of the Big Business conglomerates into shady relations with the Nixon administration in simple, obvious terms. It was a period when the public was still shocked at Watergate revelations, demanding "morality in government", becoming influenced by youth ardor against Big Business excesses. Watergate revealed undreamed of excesses by Big Business in support of Nixon, in deals to support price increases, in shelving anti-trust activities. Consumer movements were drawing more support now even from some of the "Silent Majority"; knowing this even TV could not keep Ralph Nader off the TV screen. It seemed as if finally the majority of the American people had truly become disenchanted with the glories of Big Business institutions as the hallmark of Americana.

Then came the announcement of the Oil Embargo. From delivery of Arab crude to its distribution as a finished product at gas stations takes several months, yet almost overnight, following the Embargo announcement, much of the U.S. was starved with extreme short supplies. Cars formed unending lines for months around gas stations; prices rose virtually by the day.

Then OPEC announced the oil price hike. They had been selling, they said, at a ridiculously low price, set by colonial consortiums, and that had been very unfair.

Admittedly, it was big news and worthy of headlines. But media went far beyond that. Media experts, Big Business experts, its selected economists, all forecast economic havoc, as a result of the oil price increase. There would be even greater inflation, far greater unemployment, perhaps even another depression, they said. After Watergate ended, the oil price hike story received solus top billing. By now, it was freely referred to as Arab blackmail, along with grave forecasts of economic turmoil.

The announced OPEC price hike was to be effective almost a year hence. But with the public now suitably frightened and conditioned, oil prices and other consumer prices started to increase immediately. It should not be forgotten that the economy had been in doldrums for some time now. In August 1971, for instance, consumer price index had shown a record increase of 14.8%, the highest monthly rise since the Depression. But now it got worse.

Media epithets at the Arabs had the desired effect upon the public; even those who had not felt any emotions about the Middle East situation, were now freely cursing the bleep Arabs for their problems. More important, consumer movements began to wane. Experts on TV told America that the growing regulations upon Big Business, plus foreign competition, and now the horrors of heavier costs upon raw material as a result of the oil price, would hit all business, and therefore, business would have to tighten its belt very severely. Retrenchments would start, forecasts of a possible depression became more frequent. A terrified public, recalling the Great Depression, began to shrink away from the consumer movements. Let Big Business be corrupt, let's not tie their hands as long as we have jobs, was the public's reaction.

In the meanwhile, despite the hundreds of hours of TV discussions, there was no

clear indication of how much more the OPEC price increase was in terms of price per gallon; no breakdown of costs to show how much the OPEC countries charged for their crude, and how much was added to that cost through the subsequent process and marketing. It took several years in fact, before any major media provided even that form of breakdown. *Time* magazine (January 31, 1979) after further OPEC increases, said that Saudi crude oil cost *one cent per gallon*, FOB Persian Gulf port; thereafter the costs — freight, shipping, refining, distribution, advertising, etc. increased the costs substantially (including recent royalty fees to the Saudis) until it was retailed to the public (at that stage) at between 55-65 cents per gallon, in some areas more in others.

The OPEC countries had claimed that the hysteria in the West was unfair, that the price increase should amount to no more than 1% of all cost-of-living inflation to the American consumer; that they needed the extra revenues to bring their faltering economies to reasonable standards; that they would be buying a great deal of other products and services from the West, and therefore, petrodollars would return in large amounts to the U.S.

They did buy enormous quantities of manufactured products from the U.S.; some in fact went on ridiculous spending sprees. And they invested heavily in Western banks. By 1981, about 20% of an estimated \$315 billion in petrodollars had been deposited in Western banks and another 20% loaned to world lending institutions like IMF. The rest the OPEC members (Arabs in particular) spent in break-neck attempts to modernize and industrialize; at least some of the oil-rich princes went on an unending spree of self-indulgence for themselves and their families. Stung by the never-ending ridicule from the West, the Arabs were seeking also to create Manhattan skylines of their own; they provided free education and medical aid for their citizens; they invested heavily in business and real estate in the U.S. and Europe. And they bought arms.

The bottom line with regard to U.S. foreign trade after the OPEC price hike looked like this: the U.S. share of world manufactured products exports, which had fallen steadily until 1973, when it was 19% now *increased* sharply to 21% the following year and would reach 28% by 1977. The dollar which during Mr. Nixon's five years in office had fallen by 20% was now strengthening again.

In 1974 and 1975, U.S. oil companies, in their official reports declared the highest profit increases in their history — one as high as 1500%. They received fringe benefits too. Early in 1974, Mr. Nixon announced that oil companies should be encouraged to look for new oil so that American dependence on foreign oil would end. As incentive he felt they should get better margins on new explorations above the control price. During Mr. Carter's administration, the figures were in. There had been provable illegal gauging of oil price by the oil companies of \$2,000,000,000 — it could be much more, but this was the amount that the major oil companies could be charge-sheeted with; additionally through the simple task of switching their records to claim the high prices allowed for "new" oil by Mr. Nixon, when in fact it was "old" oil, the major Texas oil traders had fraudulently claimed another several billion dollars in excess profits. More disclosures were to come later. Significantly, at the time the oil price hike became effective in 1975, the U.S. imported 33% of its oil requirements. By 1978, this was to increase to 48%. During this period of course, all other oil importing countries were cutting down on their imports as much as possible.

In the circumstances, the claim that Nixon-Kissinger had arm-twisted the Shah of Iran to *increase* oil prices and buy American arms with it (which even CBS' *60 Minutes* was to air in the Spring of 1980), does not sound too farfetched; the Shah



was to place an order for \$20,000,000,000 in arms alone during the last few years of his reign.

Was American media merely foolish and emotional in its hysteria in forecasting wild inflationary spirals after the announcement of oil price increase by OPEC? The three TV networks were by now commercial empires and employed expert Think Tanks and strategists — they were even to employ Henry Kissinger and President Ford after they left office. It seems inconceivable that, with highly paid experts, they would not have known if a wild inflationary spiral was forecast, Big Business would use the opportunity to step up prices all around — and not just oil prices. Some of the most profitable years in fact for several major conglomerates were the years following the oil price hike hysteria. And that *included* the TV network parent and subsidiary companies.

The point, perhaps, is best made if we stop and consider how TV in particular could have behaved responsibly at the time. For *the good of the American people and the economy*, it could have emphasized that (1) there was some justice for the developing countries to want more for their raw material, that these developing economies needed the money, and the crude oil prices had been set extremely low by the colonial consortiums; (2) it could have emphasized that the impact of the oil price increase on inflation would in real terms be miniscule; if anything media should have been extremely conservative in this projection, knowing how inflation hysteria could encourage skyrocketting inflation; (3) it could have emphasized that the oil companies should not take the opportunity to increase prices, that in these difficult days of Watergate, they could even absorb the extra cost; (4) Government should be alert to ensure that business did not take it as an opportunity to create more inflation.

Could it have been merely shortsighted foolishness, despite the highly paid talent, some of who were paid over a million dollar a year? There were angry consumer advocates who were already claiming that there was price gauging; TV did report this — in passing, however. It was not the big story. The big story that saturated the airwaves was what to do about the Arab blackmail which was going to do awful things to the American economy. There was much talk about invading the Arab oilfields.

Then OPEC announced that the skyrocketting inflation on all American exports after 1974 made OPEC no better off than before, because their purchases with petrodollars from the West, cost as much if not more than before the OPEC price increase; so they increased the oil price again. The vicious cycle was on.

Media's inflation-recession hysteria, following that first oil price hike, had by now proven to be dangerous for the American and world economies. Curiously no politician took media to task about it. Then, it was done again, with even greater hysteria. That was towards January 1979, when it seemed that the Iranian revolution would be successful and the Shah toppled. TV, in particular, made no bones about how strongly it felt that President Carter should help the Shah retain power. To arouse the public, TV experts predicted enormous oil shortages should be expected with the crisis in Iran. This time, both Carter and Secretary of State Vance objected to the hysteria, and pointed out, more than once, that Iran supplied no more than 2-3% of America's oil import. That did not satisfy TV networks. On December 10, 1978, the President of Standard Oil Company (Indiana) was interviewed by CBS on *Face The Nation*, and asked leading questions, seemingly to make the oil crisis a reality. But he too, like Carter and Vance, insisted that Iran accounted for no more than 3% of American oil imports. This too was brushed aside. TV experts continued to make references to



their own estimates that went as high as 10% (some local New York TV commentators, always willing to follow their network's lead, even said 20%). In CBS news specials (such as the significantly titled *Who Lost Iran?*) Walter Cronkite emphasized, among the other tragedies, that oil supplies would be drastically affected, prices would rise. In the January 23, 1979 Special, Cronkite even talked about possible rationing and gas station closures. Former Energy Secretary Schlesinger (never exactly close to Carter) was brought on, and he forecast that gas prices at the pumps would rise by at least 25% and there would be great shortages by summer. Senator Henry Jackson got on TV frequently (as he always could) to say that the oil situation was definitely dangerous because of the Iranian revolution, and he forecast that oil prices at the gas pumps would rise (from the current level of about 70 cents) to \$1 per gallon by the end of the year. He was brought on often and he dutifully said it often.

The oil companies obliged, of course. Why should they not? Gas prices reached \$1 by the summer. Only later, it was known that so far from the extreme shortages and gas rationing, the U.S. oil reserves were overflowing; so huge was the oil glut, that tankers had to be leased as storage tanks. Additionally, Saudi Arabia, terrified about Western repercussions, had increased its daily output to 10 million barrels a day; in the resultant hysteria of the time, gold prices and silver prices had skyrocketed — along with other commodities. A wild inflationary cycle was once again placed in full gear. The public, of course, never held the likes of Uncle Walter, Schlesinger, Jackson, responsible, just loved them for their patriotism.

The OPEC price hikes did hit several economies very severely and directly. In the unending tumult of world-wide inflationary spiral, worse than any that had been experienced in recent years, greed among the contributing factions was never pinpointed as the cause. And in that tumult, the root causes of economic problems that had, for some years, already manifested themselves as destructive to the nation's economy, were set aside even before they were clearly known.

Some of these causes had been identified by reformers. Some had not. And therefore in future years, the economy of the U.S. and several other countries could be held to ransom and exploited with abandon and impunity, as a mute public meekly followed TV's and major print media's directives on the causes and solutions to economic woes. World media dutifully followed, for the most part, the lead of American media and their economic experts.

During Mr. Nixon's regime, the nation's gross national product (GNP) was nearly \$1,500,000,000,000, even though production facilities were not being used fully and almost 20% of the nation's consumers were kept a spent force. There was one important reason why the nation had continued to suffer economic woes, periodic recessions and become so dependent upon economic resurgence through destructive military productions and sales. And that was decaying economic policy.

In reviewing economic policy, what must not be forgotten is that the riches in the land were there naturally; in whatever form the American economic policy would have been formulated, therefore, America could not have helped becoming the richest land in the world. To claim, therefore, that there was something magical about every aspect of American fiscal policy of the past (or *lack* of it) as the right formula for all time would be to claim that all that is being done in Saudi Arabia or the Arab Emirates is the ultimate formula, because these countries now have the highest per capita income in the world.

And, to claim that what had once worked in economic policy, must work for all

time, is even more dangerous. The U.S., in Mr. Nixon's regime, had reached a stage where excessive Bigness was *stifling* economic growth, where excessive advertising (especially TV advertising) was not only socially and politically harmful to the nation but economically dangerous.

Honest review and the willingness to recognize past errors was needed; creative, constructive changes were needed not simplistic and corrupt continuance of the same policies under the excuse of "conservatism". Bigness and excessive advertising were becoming *fiscal* liabilities on the nation's economy. Text books tell us that advertising leads to sales increase which leads to more production and efficiency, lower price to consumers, therefore more sales. We are so accustomed to this belief that we assume this cycle continues *ad infinitum*. But it does not. Other nations following the same "conservative" economic package as the U.S. may not have yet reached that level beyond text book formulae, but some were getting close. What we must look at here is the U.S. economy.

It must be reiterated, as we examine some data to substantiate these claims that what is meant here as the destructive size of Big Business is *not* the average successful company with a few branches across the U.S. and foreign countries, earning a few million dollars a year and employing a couple of thousand employees. What is referred to as Big Business is the empires that had, by now, become conglomerates comprising of several companies, with turnovers larger than the GNP of many countries, and others which, even though somewhat smaller, had virtually a monopolistic hold on some critical industries; Big Business, in other words, which could, by itself or in consort with a few others of similar power, control the minds of the public and the political affairs of the U.S. and other nations; having the ability to control markets, create economic trends, and crush smaller competition at will.

Let us then examine a few facts about the economy during Mr. Nixon's regime. We must be willing to believe that the issues are not so complex as experts and economists, aweing us with technical jargon, would have us believe. We can understand these matters and identify the real causes (and thereby know where solutions lie) if we are willing to be honest with ourselves and use our own minds. From the Nixon era onwards, the American people were to be conditioned to believe that the expert economists thrust on the TV screens knew all the answers in their abstract theories. No doubt they were experts in determining trends. There were, in time, no Galbraiths, but only Freidmans and Laffers, Consultants to Big Business. They told the nation that it was Government spending on social services (not military) that was to blame for the nation's economic problems; sometimes these experts could get very annoyed that Big Business was being blamed at all; in fact, they said, Big Business should be set free from Government regulations so that the economy could flourish again.

What they did not add was that the "supply side" economics was intended (1) to allow Big Business to create economic trends at will, and thereby keep friendly U.S. governments in control and (2) higher unemployment, along with cuts in social service programs, would frighten the Have-Nots, keep them too busy trying to survive, and the American mainstream too frightened to dare get involved in consumer movements.

Inflation had worsened steadily; by 1974, consumer prices on basic needs were 44% higher than in 1968, according to official Bureau of Statistics itself; inflation had in fact eaten into the nation's prosperity year after year since the boom times after World War 2.

What causes inflation? Big Business economists, Big Business leaders, politicians TV commentators and syndicated columnists had all saturated our minds with their expertise. But perhaps there are aspects which they decided not to consider, either out of ignorance or other considerations. And perhaps the subject is not as complex as the experts would have us believe. Let us leave the mighty chef-experts and their abstract reasoning of what the menu should look like, and see what was happening in the kitchen.

Inflation, or higher prices, occur when production and/or marketing costs increase, or when the seller decides to make more profits, or both. In the normal course, in the free enterprise system the text-books tell us, the would-be seller prepares the product or service to suit the buyer's needs and sells at a price that he feels the market will bear i.e., what the buyer will prefer over competition's quality and price. In order to attract purchase, the seller makes his product or service, advertising and sales promotion as attractive and competitive as possible. Advertising creates more demand, therefore more sales, therefore more production at cheaper costs, therefore lower consumer price, bigness, more efficient and advanced production/services, and so on into Utopia.

But, as we have seen earlier in some detail, the U.S. market place had reached some very unhealthy levels; because the U.S. was the largest and the most advanced consumer market in the world, the stage it had reached had no precedents. There were *new* variables which economic experts had not faced in past theories. A few mammoth conglomerates had grown into empires, crushed smaller competition, risen vertically and horizontally, nationally and internationally. They had the hitherto unknown lethal power of TV to use on the public mind. Marketing for these tycoons now included control of political processes, control of public lifestyle and attitudes, foreign policy. Controlling the huge armies of personnel and products, deeply researched steps, extreme concern for cost efficiency (since it all involved millions of dollars), therefore refusal to take chances with ideas, or time in the development of new products or services. Instead the clumsy giant had to move slowly, carefully, taking no chances because it did not need to do so. It produced innumerable "me-too" products along with its few fellow giants, spent millions on research, including psychological research to increase the yearnings, and create new ones, create wants, fears, in order to sell.

The old days of brilliant ideas resulting in overnight millionaires were long gone — except of course in TV shows and movies, to whom that romanticism and the glamor of Bigness was most critical to be kept alive, so the public would feel contented in living in reflected glory. Those were *American* conglomerates, *American* skyscrapers, *American* Big Business.

For major media, especially TV, this "patriotic" glamorizing was a critical requirement. It was truly Big Business itself; the TV networks and the major newspapers were giants with many subsidiaries. And what kept those profits growing to buy more companies were the advertising revenues from other Big Business.

Curiously, even in the thick of continuous discussions about the economy and inflation, neither media experts nor expert economists ever referred to the *cost* of advertising; over the years the public had been convinced that commercial TV was free to themselves.

Advertising costs had been leaping higher each year, and most of TV — especially network TV advertising — was by now almost monopolized by a few giants. This was for two reasons: enormous costs, huge time buys, plus arm-twisting



obtained for the huge giants the cream of the TV advertising sponsorship and "block" contract rates (special discounts). Even without such discounts, network TV advertising for the small and mid-sized corporation was much too expensive; even some large corporations could not dare to use it or dare to get into certain product categories — to compete they would have to spend a fortune against the major giants. By 1974, the advertising budget for several household products categories had to be at least \$10,000,000 in advertising for the first year alone.

TV advertising costs had been increasing even faster than other media.\* In 1967, total Business advertising in the U.S. was \$16,870,000,000. In 1970, it was \$19,550,000,000; in 1973, it had reached \$25,000,000,000.

In 1977, it was \$37,500,000,000. By 1984, it was to reach \$88,000,000,000.\*\*

By 1970, just five of the largest national advertisers were responsible for 25% of all network TV revenues, and 14 of the largest were responsible for 50% of all network revenues. There were 1,700 national advertisers (T.V. print, radio) in the U.S. But 100 of this corporations spent 40% of all national advertising dollars and nine of these 1,700 (0.5%) spent 11% of all the advertising dollars.

It could be argued that this was what the future Reagan administration would call "supply side economics". Just a little more intelligent thought should make it clear that (i) the public was buying the products yet it was paying for something it never knew it really paid for, as a huge additional cost and (ii) the medium of TV was a unique, new lethal medium with impact upon the mind far beyond what had been known, to be considered merely another "free choice" made by the public and (iii) these mammoth deals between giants had strangled other corporations out of competition. The market place in most product categories had reached the stage where advertising was not absorbed in volume growth.

And there was something else which such simplistic thinking — or hoodwinking — had caused; the grim results of which were already becoming obvious to those who could see them. Competing against each other for more advertising, and an increase in client budgets, TV over the years conducted massive research studies, and as we have seen, had developed among other standard matrix, the overall news and entertainment programming formula of flattering the American consumer, as any salesman would, in order to place him or her in the right frame of mind for the next TV commercial.

Based upon A.C. Nielsen's continuing TV viewing audits, the average American child 2-11 years old watched TV 4.07 hours a day (other auditors put this even higher); from 12-17, the teenagers watched for 3.37 hours a day, or 15,000 hours through their teens; the average woman watched 17,000 hours every ten years; the average man 14,000 hours every ten years.

The skilled presentation of TV programming and advertising, following the established matrix, had by now discernable *negative* impacts upon the economy,

\* TV network rates had been increased dramatically, often up to 12-15% a year. Rates had doubled from 1955 to 1965, then doubled again from 1965 to 1970. From 1970 to 1982, they were to increase 125%. An average one minute of prime time top rated TV show had cost about \$50,000 in 1965. By 1970, it cost \$125,000. This was to keep growing at the same rate until in 1978, one minute would cost as much as \$230,000 on top shows and \$340,000 on specials like the Super Bowl and Miss America Pageant. Cost was more than double that in 1978 — one thirty second commercial cost \$325,000, by the early 1980s.

\*\* It should be noted that we are now considering advertising by Big Business through major media only. The figures do *not* include sales promotion, retail co-operative advertising, public relations. They do not include political advertising. They do not include government advertising. The military was estimated to spend \$200,000,000 at this time.

something more serious to the nation than the amount of time wasted watching TV, the loss of personal development and family life. Because of the excessive advertising and the psychological skills it used to create wants, the men and women who could not afford to buy, developed extreme frustrations, along with the predictable cumulative effects of the excessive national chauvinism involved in what may be called history's classic syndrome: group narcissism, complacency, stagnation, decline. The supreme conviction that "nothing like us ever was" had reached the stage where the destructive effects were preceptible in productivity. And both the frustration and the complacency were most manifest, of course, among the most impressionable, the lower income and lesser educated.

Unions clamored, went to strikes. It must be remembered that the American worker had historically been unfairly treated; some still were, but now there was something else added: the deep frustrations and desires for things that TV had convinced them were critical for the affluent American. Deals were made with management; in the private sector, the pay hikes were added on to the product selling price; media (especially TV) gave full coverage to such union demands — soon union leadership\* was as sophisticated as any politician in using that exposure, as were many rank and file members. The settlement of the union-management disputes and media comments made the public expect the price increase in manufactured product; it came of course; the union worker soon found his pay increase did not improve his standard of living, after enough union-management deals had led to general consumer price increases. The increase only just covered the resulting inflation (in much the same way as the OPEC oil price syndrome worked). The inflationary spiral went on.

In the public sector, some unions, such as public service unions in New York, got the city to agree to a fixed relationship in pay levels, between the city police, firemen, garbage collectors. As a result, when one union won a pay hike, the other was automatically to expect at least a corresponding pay hike. If it got more, the others could demand more too.

All of this had led by now to the most peculiar and most dangerous values on services to society; an average interstate truck driver earned \$30,000 a year; a New York garbage collector earned \$16,350 about the same as the assemblyline auto worker. And the average Assistant Professor at an Ivy League university like Yale earned \$14,000. No doubt, the Yale professor dreamed of the day he could be an assemblyline worker at General Motors, and catch the eye of the foreman.

When Nixon became President, media was beginning to criticize the union demands, gently of course (labor was an enormously important segment of the viewing public). But the real problem was not the union worker. Why should he or she not demand the most they could get, especially when they were goaded into desires beyond their current earning capacity? Why were the demands of workers unfair, when management could earn as much as the market could let them, under the patriotic banner of "free enterprise" and a free society?

The real problem was that the simplistic claims to a free society, of allowing the market to find its own level, was impractical now. Carried to its logical extreme, such social Darwinism could lead to the justification of a wild West outlaw ransacking a

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\* For the purpose of this discussion, we shall ignore the union leaders with crime syndicate associations, or those who sold out to Management, in one way or another.

town and justifying it as his right in a free society; he had the guns, the expertise to use them.

Even Adam Smith, the Scottish economist upon whose "Wealth of Nations" the current Western free enterprise systems were based, had said, "The interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only as far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer... The proposal of any new law or regulation of commerce which comes from this order [commercial interests] ought always to be listened to with great caution. It comes from an order of men whose interest is never the same as that of the public, *who have generally an interest to deceive and even to oppress the public*, and who accordingly have, upon many occasions, both deceived and oppressed it".

But in the U.S., that historic jingoism, the belief that it was the new Promised Land, the New Jerusalem, and the enormous wealth accruing to a nation of the Old World's poor so fast, had ingrained the belief that nothing could really go wrong. The simple idea of allowing markets to find their own levels appealed to the American public and fused well with its adventurous past. But if indeed, America was a favored land — and it certainly had been very fortunate — then some of basic Christian warnings should have been heeded. These did not come from the contemporary Church, often so deeply entrenched within the governing establishment itself. "Money is the root of all evil" was a nonsense thought from an old song — of course it could not be. But what Paul had reportedly written to Timothy was "*Love of money is the root of all evil*", an entirely different warning. And Jesus, of course had warned more strongly, more often than anyone against greed. "No servant can be the slave of two Masters. You cannot be the slave of God and Money" (Luke:16:13). "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven" (Luke:18:25).

The other major destructive impact from commercial TV, chauvinism and resultant complacency in productivity, was manifesting itself most dramatically during Mr. Nixon's presidency. The American worker, entirely convinced about his superiority over workers in other countries, was becoming careless, inefficient. Quality and productivity in other countries was improving. Significantly, Germany and Japan, the two countries who had been losers in World War 2, had made spectacular advances, especially in technological production. The people of these two nations had not had the luxury of self-glorification, after the World War 2 defeat. Now, in the U.S., American TV had to switch its tune. It had established over the years, in innumerable TV shows that the Germans were fumbling fools, and the Japanese were always smiling, bowing and making cheap imitations of American Quality. In 1971, TV had to inform Americans that these two nations had become serious threats to American supremacy in quality production, that America's dwindling exports on the one hand, and the fast rising exports of these two and other countries, had created a serious problem with balance of trade, that the U.S. did not have the gold back-up for the dollars that were circulating overseas.

That other nations should become competitive was not that surprising, except of course to the American public trained by TV. The historical syndrome for mighty empires — group narcissism, complacency, stagnation, decline — was one that had recurred through the ages. What was remarkable is that in the U.S., this destructive chauvinism had come about not over a century or two, as in the case of older empires, but within a few years.

Even without this influence, however, American domination of world markets would inevitably have had to decline. When American media over recent years



referred scoffingly to the enormous difference between the levels of wages in foreign countries — especially Third World countries — and the U.S., it omitted to take into consideration that the cost of living was a great deal less, and that *the lower wages had to lead to much cheaper production costs*. Also, many of the raw material producers were now awakening to the fact that the pricing of their commodities, despite adjustments, were still based upon colonial exploitative standards.

Sooner or later, in the civilized order of things, that enormous tilt of recent centuries towards the West would have had to end. The public had to be conditioned to understand and accept that reality.

There had been another contributing factor to the emerging challenge in manufacture from some of the Third World countries, *including Japan*. American Big Business, in the face of higher labor costs in the U.S., had been using foreign labor for a variety of products, including electronic products. Sometimes, a few parts were made abroad, then (at first quietly) more and more components were made overseas, then just enough of the final assembly and manufacture to give it the “Made in U.S.A.”. This had undoubtedly helped the foreign competition develop expertise. If the American manufacturer was careless in his methods, it must be remembered that the same chauvinism that engrossed the American worker, also engrossed the manufacturer. He simply did not expect that “American know-how” could be equalled by others.

There were important reasons for the growing productivity and innovations from foreign countries. Since World War 2, the U.S. government — especially in the Eisenhower and Nixon administrations — had severely cut back on government involvement in education, sciences, innovations, research and development and left it to Big Business. Government allocations towards science, even medical research, was discouraged, even vetoed.

As we have seen, Big Business being entirely profit-motivated, was not about to take chances or spend great amounts of time and money upon “possible” uncertain breakthroughs. Also, if there was any question about immediate profit returns, or a fall in those profits, American Big Business and its cost efficiency experts either dismissed or paid-off millions of workers. Top Management, it must be remembered, were usually very newly-rich themselves; the zeal for immediate profit returns, to ensure a satisfied Board and major share-holders, was paramount.

In some of the other countries, such lay-offs and insecurity were not as severe. Government encouragement and involvement in both private and public sector was real. As a result, many recent inventions, from the X-ray scanner (Britain) to the recycling of waste in construction (Japan), originated in other countries. U.S. productivity in the past ten years had grown 27% (the same as Britain) but this was half the growth in Germany, France, Italy and one-quarter that of Japan. In 1966, U.S. inventors had 45,633 patents (for new products and processes) in foreign countries, while foreigners had 9,567 registered in the U.S. By 1976, U.S. inventors had only 33,181 such patents overseas, whereas foreigners had 18,744, or nearly double the patents they had in the U.S. ten years earlier.

While this was not good news for the American economy, it must be understood that for Big Business conglomerates, there were other compensations. By now, these empires spread across the world, and made most of their money abroad. The irony of their friendly politicians’ claim that “when Big Business flourished, the economy flourished” could have been comic if it were not so tragic, because so many Americans were convinced it was so. Reporting on a confidential study (why it was confidential

was not revealed), *Time* magazine (Oct 9, 1978) stated that at about the mid-1970s, "The Multinationals were producing \$200,000,000,000 worth of goods abroad". That was nearly five times greater than total U.S. exports. Needless to add, if Big Business paid very nominal taxes for its U.S. operations, it paid none at all for its huge international profits to the American Treasury.

To understand the issues with regard to the economy, to show what Mr. Nixon did to solve the problems and what it led to, is important — especially so, because just a few years later, the public had given a resounding vote of confidence to Mr. Reagan to continue where Mr. Nixon left off, with even greater weight in favor of Big Business.

Mr. Nixon took office in January 1969. In 1971, there was unprecedented world-wide commotion, as rumors spread of a possible dollar devaluation. By then, foreign trade balance was even worse — there had been the typical psychological reaction to media's shocking announcement to the public that foreign manufactures — especially German and Japanese — were competing very favorably with American products. When excessive propaganda is discovered to be false, there is usually a bitter and cynical reaction by the public. American youth, indoctrinated all their lives with unreal spy stories and propaganda against communism, had reacted so strongly in the opposite direction in the Vietnam anger, that they refused to place credibility even on the *true* dangers of communism. Similarly, the American public, suddenly made aware of the quality of German and Japanese products, had begun to buy them, many for the first time, finding their quality even superior than they should, and the prices a lot cheaper.

The U.S. auto and other durable product manufacturers, faced an unusual problem but could not react with new thinking. They were entrenched in their standard marketing philosophy and investments, into "planned obsolescence", the practice of spreading changes and improvements into the product not at once but over several years, so that consumers would be tempted to buy new models each year and discard the earlier model. Then, for the auto makers, there was the lack of expertise in the making of smaller autos, now growing in demand. For years, they had made large cars with standard features but outward design changes, and sold them aided by heavy advertising, stressing image and status. For years, they and friendly media had referred to these foreign cars derisively as "toys". American auto makers were convinced the interest in these "toys" was only a passing fad,\* and the public would return to the American big car, in which Detroit had too much invested; it was not about to spend a fortune on learning new technology and on new plant machinery.

It was in these conditions that Mr. Nixon put forward his economic policies. His business suits, his aides from Big Business, his close association with Big Business, all presumably gave the public the feeling that his economic policies, especially when they were backed so enthusiastically by Big Business, had to be the right ones. After all, if Big Business benefited, would not the country as a whole? "What is good for General Motors is good for America"; the public had been told that through the years.

Mr. Nixon's policy was of course what Presidents who were friends of business had loudly proclaimed since Civil War days. Mr. Nixon said he wanted to give more freedom to Business because it was the American Way; if Big Business prospered,

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\* Studies at the time did show that many Americans who bought foreign smaller cars were of that segment who was very keen to be in the "cultural explosion" currently taking place.

everyone prospered. He said our current problems were because Kennedy and Johnson had spent too much on social services programs, causing budget deficits; he did not talk of the military expenditure or how much the Vietnam War was costing taxpayers (it was in fact to cost \$150,000,000,000). But he said he was working on a plan.

Mr. Nixon lowered the dollar value in 1971 then "floated" the dollar, announcing also that the dollar would no longer be related to the Gold Standard, an action that would create a world wide upheaval in the future. Immediately it caused the dollar to be like any stock on the money market; it plunged now; lost over 20% of the value it had before August 1971. Mr. Nixon told America not to worry, however; his plan was that with the decreased value of the dollar, foreign imports would be much more expensive, whereas American products would be much cheaper abroad. U.S. trade balance, therefore, would soon begin to show very healthy trends, and the dollar value would rise. To ensure that imported products were penalized, he also placed a 10% surcharge on some of them, 14% on autos.

It all sounded great to many Americans (especially those who did not buy foreign products much), but it just did not work out the way Mr. Nixon said it would. Foreign products soon cost 30-40% more, from TV sets to automobiles. But American business simply raised its own prices steadily to about the same levels as foreign products and spent some of the extra earnings on increased advertising. Auto trade unions (auto plants were always the first to close down to save money) saw it all happening and made more demands; their insecurity made their productivity even less reliable. Mistakes increased. Under heavy publicity, new contracts had allowed auto prices to rise again. Supplier industries saw it all happening; unions' demands were met, prices increased. By August 1972 the inflation rate was 14.5%, the highest in 30 years.

In the meanwhile, to sooth the growing consumerism in the nation, Mr. Nixon periodically introduced wage and price controls. But he did that in his own style. His plan of price control was an unusual one, involving three-month controls, then part control on some industries, not in others; then there was removal of controls, another period of three-six months control and so on. Significant, too, were his timings. For instance, a few months before the 1972 presidential elections, he introduced controls, then in January 1973 he removed them. All these control periods were, of course, announced in carefully worded speeches to the nation. The average American home, listening to his periodic speeches on controls and how he was moving from one phase to the next, were no doubt suitably impressed at his "hold" of the situation. Big Business of course was quite willing to have Mr. Nixon win over the public by these three month controls — though of course they objected officially on TV — because they could simply add to price increases after the three months.

In his economy speeches, Mr. Nixon always announced the grave and continuing need to "cool the economy" to reduce inflation. By this he meant that Federal spending on social and educational programmes should be drastically reduced and unemployment should be allowed to rise so that inflation and recession may be controlled. Big Business had to be allowed to make more profits after which they could begin to employ the unemployed again.

To "cool the economy" he proceeded, as we have seen, to hold up several allocations already approved by Congress. Among them was \$1,000,000,000 for health and education that he was finally forced to release in December 1973. There were many other allocations, approved by Congress, such as those for hospital systems



for veterans, loans for poor farmers, for water pollution control that Mr. Nixon merely impounded and refused to let the Office of Management Budget (OMB) spend.

On the other hand, as Louis Fisher, political scientist, was to report, "approximately \$15-20,000,000,000 of appropriations mainly for defence (military), which was never even explained to Congress by the Nixon administration, was smoothly passed by Nixon".

Similarly, on matters of personal interest, Mr. Nixon had other views. When the Milk Board made a pledge of \$225,000 to his re-election Campaign, he quickly approved a price hike on raw milk, causing a wild jump in all dairy products. His Wheat Deal with Russia (totalling \$750,000,000 to start with) certainly helped foreign exports look good (a powerful selling point in his own 1972 campaign) but aside from the massive fortunes made by the "insiders" made aware of the impending deal, it skyrocketed wheat and bread prices in the U.S. and because of consequent animal feed shortages, there were massive price hikes in meat and beef, very little of which went to the small farmers. As was revealed later, these were 17 Presidents of conglomerates and 125 major corporations who were willing to make not legal, but illegal contributions to the Nixon funds, all with their own special favors in mind. During Watergate hearings, they were to plead guilty. But before all of this could sink into the public consciousness, came the OPEC oil price hike announcement. It saved the day for Big Business.

Let us grant that even if it was cruel and ruthless to try to "cool the economy" by denying basic needs to the poor, the sick and the unemployed, Mr. Nixon meant to save money and also reduce an over-active consumer market.

But there was advertising, that vital, inherent part of inflation that made costs rise. If it was his aim to genuinely reduce consumer demand, should not this President, more aware than any of the enormous power and impact of advertising and marketing tools, have thought of asking Big Business during recession to reduce or at least hold the *same levels* of advertising? After all, though a fierce advocate of free trade, he was doing everything including increased tariffs, to protect American business from foreign competition, in view of the emergency.

Why, if the times were so bad for Big Business, and Mr. Nixon wanted so much to "cool the economy", was so much being spent on advertising? Why had the extraordinary increases in annual advertising expenditures not been commented upon by any of the many experts, the economists, the politicians, the media commentators who had discussions on the economy on TV and print every day? And why was Mr. Nixon, obviously aware of the extent that advertising dollars contributed to inflation, not willing to denounce the TV networks and major print media, especially for their rate hikes when he was supposed to hate them so much?

The reason is simple. Mr. Nixon was angry with some reporters. He was a friend to the top command of the TV networks. And, finding excessive advertising a culprit would be furiously objected to, by the giant advertisers.

It must be emphasised that the solution to the advertising excesses was *not* in stoppage of advertising, then or at any time. Despite the peculiar conditions that the American economy had developed, responsible advertising *was still an economic necessity*. The real problem was in the excessive advertising, the extremely high costs, the virtual monopoly of network TV advertising by a few, and — because of the over-saturated markets with me-too products, the unhealthy misleading tricks that were now commonly practiced, so often under the guise of creative license, with grave sociological damage upon the American public.

It was often assumed that while the U.S. corporations spend a lot more on advertising than those in other countries, that it is only because of the size and the prosperity of the wealthiest nation in the world. A glance at the following analysis prepared for trade journals by International Research Associates and International Advertising Associations for 1970 should quickly dispel that fallacy:

*Advertising Volume 1970*

	<i>Ad Outlay</i>	<i>Gross National Product</i>	<i>Ad Volume As Percent Of GNP</i>
U.S.A.	\$19,600,000,000	\$927,600,000,000	2.11
West Germany	\$ 2,693,900,000	\$172,700,000,000	1.56
U.K.	\$ 1,264,800,000	\$111,800,000,000	1.13
Japan	\$ 2,115,300,000	\$185,600,000,000	1.14
France	\$ 996,000,000	\$138,000,000,000	0.72
Canada	\$ 1,037,200,000	\$ 82,800,000,000	1.25

Some additional factors must be borne in mind. This difference among nations in advertising in 1970 existed, despite the fact that many of the large U.S. corporations were among the heaviest advertisers in each of these foreign countries through their overseas operations. As we have noted, U.S. multinationals exported five times more from overseas than from the U.S. And U.S. ad agencies were among the most prominent in these foreign lands. The U.S. ad agency control of foreign advertising was to grow even greater in future years of "world wide recession" as they proceeded to buy up many foreign ad agencies and merge between themselves to become even more powerful giants. Consider what was transpiring just in Europe, right then. Leo Burnett agency, Chicago, was to buy London Press Exchange (once the largest, then the second largest British agency) in mid-1969. SSC&B acquired 49% of LINTAS, the Unilever ad agency with offices around the world, in 1970. SSC&B was later to be acquired (with \$725,000,000 annual billings) by the giant Interpublic (\$1,500,000,000 in annual billings by 1976) who also owned Erwin Wasey, Marschalk, and McCann Erickson, and was soon also to acquire Campbell Ewald. D'Arcy was to acquire Britain's largest ad agency Masius Wynn-Williams in the U.S. in 1970/71. A series of complicated purchases first by Needam Harper & Steers and later by Ogilvy & Mather landed the latter with its former parent (S.H. Benson of Britain), while the former partnered with KMPH of Britain purchased a number of smaller British ad agencies. The list grew by the month.

We should note that the comparison of ad expenditure above is of 1970. Advertising expenditures in the U.S. were to grow, thereafter by substantial even record levels each year to, reach \$70,000,000,000 in 1982. It might also be noted that TV network advertising expenditure (excluding all other TV advertising) was to increase by 160% from 1970 to preliminary estimates for 1978 (\$1,658,000,000 to \$3,850,000,000). It had already increased 125% by 1977 final figures. These rates were to increase steadily in future years at an average of 13% each year.

It needs to be repeated; massive advertising expenditure by a few giant corporations, with several "me-too" products, contrary to the simplistic old text book contentions, stifles competition, that fundamental benefit of free enterprise and retards progressive innovations in product quality. It not only increases the product

costs, but often in our times, invites product price increase as a "status" symbol or merely to give the illusion of superior quality, which can be effectively created through that massive advertising spending. An example of each, of the early 1970s might help illustrate the point. (i) One cosmetic products corporation elected to spend a daring 50% of its annual turnover on advertising, and concurrently introduced several new products priced higher than most competition under a new "name" line. It worked and today it is one of the largest corporations in the business and with an "elite" image. (ii) The price of one candy-type product was increased by 50% in 1970. Sales temporarily fell off, but massive advertising and trade incentives (all possible with the extra earnings) enabled the corporation not only to regain its market share but forced competitors to similarly increase their retail prices within a year by 50% because the competitors could not afford the level of advertising or the heavy dealer incentives that its higher priced competitor could. (iii) A large conglomerate, in the process of acquiring smaller companies, was interested in buying one small operation in 1971 which had a unique and effective tooth cleanser. All market studies showed the product had great potential if marketed and advertised by skilled professionals. The corporation — despite being one of the largest — elected not to buy the product principally because the conventional toothpaste market giants were among the heaviest advertisers and to compete would have meant enormous advertising budgets (just one of the three largest toothpaste marketeers at this point spent a total of \$730,000,000 a year).

In the national gloom with the trends, it was easy to overlook the fact that the U.S. was still an enormously prosperous country. The country's gross national product (earnings from segments of national resources) was even then approaching \$1,500,000,000 a year.

Against that were the realities. It had to happen, sooner or later; some other countries had caught up and were providing very stiff competition to the U.S. in the international and domestic consumer markets. Importantly, the oil price hikes may have come about out of anger against Western pro-Israel attitudes, but they signalled an important political and sociological, as well as, economic change; the developing countries, which provided so much of raw material in various industries were slowly realizing that the price of raw material despite marginal adjustments from time to time, were really based upon colonial repressive standards.

The U.S. still had vast overseas markets in many categories; in some countries like Britain, American business still dominated and had in fact become deeply entranced into the local economy, often using different company names and brand names. In several developing countries, U.S. still held sway, through increasingly, local Governments and public sentiments were becoming aroused against that domination.

In some, Dollar Diplomacy arm-twisting helped. But that did not work as well as it used to in the 1950s. In some countries, with CIA help, governments not friendly to U.S. Business had been 'removed' and friendly leaders or dictators installed and propped up with massive military economic aid. But not in all.

These economic trends were the unpleasant realities. They could have been eased and the crisis delayed for a long time, had U.S. policies been different in the past, but in all likelihood it had to happen sooner or later. Other countries would catch up technologically, overseas markets would become less of a free stomping ground, slick glamor would cease to enchant. It had to be accepted. Colonialists of the past had accepted their losses and the U.S. had agreed they should.



For real, sensible, long-range economic planning, there were two vital requirements for the U.S. (i) to have extensive programmes in widening the market at home to include the 20% of the population now virtually out of the mainstream and the market place and (ii) concentrate through the federal government and private industry in real scientific and technological breakthroughs.

But before that, now, before any further delay, there was immediate economic, social, political and moral need for two basic steps:

- (i) The closing of scandalous tax loopholes for the very rich, the revision of tax laws and anti-trust provision, to ensure that giant conglomerates stayed within some rational size and scope, and with stringent tax laws making it extremely unappetising to make astronomical profits.
- (ii) Very late though it already was, to create a balance between the strength of commercial and non-commercial TV, to control the volume of advertising, to control commercial TV's excesses, in volume, rates, anti-social propaganda and exploitation through regulations, and public "jawboning"; to enforce advertising quality control through the FCC (Federal Communication Commission).
- (iii) To make political paid advertising illegal. The need currently of enormous sums to conduct such advertising made even honest politicians compromise, or even sell themselves on some issues, to get funds. A far more healthy practice would be to legislate free time on TV for candidates to answer questions in public forums, to debate one another.

It could be argued that even though advertisers spent such enormous amounts on advertising (\$410 for every family in the U.S. in 1973, and soon to be over \$900 per family each year), that it all "stimulated" the economy and provided more jobs. Was Big Business prosperity really the best way to reduce unemployment?

Facts do not show that. Let's consider some published figures from *Fortune* magazine, a magazine of The Time-Life conglomerate with heavy Big Business ties; the figures are extracted by this writer for analyses from those provided by Big Business Corporations themselves, after all other adjustments. 1973, 1974 were the years when media, Big Business and the Nixon-Ford administration talked of heavy recessions, gloom and losses to Big Business and the need to retrench employment. Employment was reduced but Dollars Sales leaped and Net Income (after all the various deductions) also grew substantially:-

*Performance of 500 Largest Industrial Corporations.*

1973      +      1974

Combined Dollar Sales	\$667,105,711,000	\$833,089,679,000
Combined Net Income	\$ 38,680,461,000	\$ 43,642,945,000
Combined Employment	15,532,080	15,318,046

It may be argued that the oil companies wrongly frightened the public, or were frightened by media forecasts and aided by friendly government officials reaped a huge harvest. So oil companies made enormous profits, at least one as much as 1500% over previous years. But then we were told by economic experts and media commentators that aside from the oil companies, the rest of Big Business was starting "to feel the pinch" the following year and had to retrench because of increased cost of material due to the oil price hikes. Let's look again then, at a few individual giant

Corporations, representative of various major industries for 1974 vs. 1975, using *Fortune* magazine figures:

*Performance of Some of the 500 Large Industrial Corporations  
(Representative of Different Major Industries)*

<i>Sales</i>	<i>Net Income</i>	<i>Employment</i>
<i>General Motors</i>		
1974 \$31,549,546,000	\$ 950,069,000	734,000
1975 \$35,725,000,000	\$1,253,000,000	681,100
<i>International Business Machines (IBM)</i>		
1974 \$12,675,292,000	\$1,837,639,000	292,350
1975 \$14,437,000,000	\$1,990,000,000	288,647
<i>Dow Chemical</i>		
1974 \$ 4,938,483,000	\$ 557,457,000	53,325
1975 \$ 4,888,114,000	\$ 615,662,000	53,121
<i>Clorox Company</i>		
1974 \$ 557,634,000	\$ 190,656,000	6,400
1975 \$ 721,505,000	\$ 265,157,000	6,200
<i>Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS TV &amp; RADIO)</i>		
1974 \$ 1,751,341,000	\$ 108,557,000	30,030
1975 \$ 1,938,867,000	\$ 122,903,000	29,177

It might be argued that there could have been various other factors — including panic that caused these Corporations to react by lowering their employment though profits increased so well.

We might then look again at some *Fortune* magazine statistics of the top 500 Industrial Corporations overall for over 20 years.

*Performance of top 500 Industrial Corporations 1954 — 1974.*

<i>Total Dollar Sales</i>	<i>Annual Average Sales Growth 1954 — 1974</i>	<i>Annual Average Employment Growth 1954 — 1974</i>
1954 \$ 136,800,000,000	9.5%	3.4%
1974 \$ 834,000,000,000		

The Labor Department Index for manufactured goods rose 80% from 1954 to 1974; "real" sales growth, even allowing for this inflation very generously still works out to 6.5% annually, against that employment grew by only 3.4%.

Finally, we might wonder how representative these 500 giant industrial corporations are of all employment. *Fortune* figures show that in 1954, the 500 largest Industrial Corporations accounted for 50% of the total industrial economy output, and had 66.0% of the profits of all industrial operations in the country. In 1974, their

share of total industrial economy output had *increased* to 67%, and their profits had *increased* to 75% of all industrial operations in the country.

Curiously, while Mr. Nixon was averse to any controls on Big Business because of his firm belief in the free enterprise system, he was not averse to placing a 10% surcharge upon foreign imports, (more on some, such as cars) and quotas on some foreign competitive product categories. Such protectionism does become necessary to help local industries, especially when it is virginal, as some of the newly freed developing countries had maintained in the 1950s. But then, the Dulles-Nixon foreign policy had fiercely chastised those countries for protectionism, used every punishment to induce that the barriers be lifted, for the free enterprise system.

There was no doubt that American labor was in deep trouble. But was the American public really to benefit now from these extra tariffs and quotas on foreign imports? It may have helped some of the labor force to keep their jobs, but the cost of living *rose*, because American manufacturers (such as in auto trade) simply raised their own prices too, when imports became more expensive.

And there was also a direct loss to the American consumer, loss of cheaper imports. Former Secretary of Defence (under Kennedy) Robert McNamara, now President of World Bank, in an address in 1977 to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development said that a study had shown that American consumers had *suffered* greatly from the protectionism of the recent past. He provided some examples; from 1975-77, the *extra* cost to the American consumer had been \$1,250,000,000 in carbon steel products, \$500,000,000 in TV sets, \$1,200,000,000 in footwear, \$660,000,000 in sugar, \$400-800,000,000 in meats. After McNamara, World Bank views and emphasis were to change dramatically.

In the meanwhile, there were human priorities which in the long run, also became economic priorities. At the World Food Conference in 1974, everyone agreed that there was a critical need to increase the buffer stock of world food reserves. It had been allowed to drop from an 88 day supply to a 20 day supply. In the U.S., farm subsidy, i.e., payment by the Federal Government to farmers *not* to grow more food, was an established policy; periodically, millions of dollars worth of food were also destroyed as part of this policy, to maintain satisfactory price levels. At this point, an average of 15 million people died from starvation each year around the world. But at the Conference, Western nations were unwilling collectively to go beyond \$530,000,000 towards the world food buffer. OPEC countries, however, agreed to donate \$400,000,000. Yet nations were spending very freely on military arsenals. Annual world-wide military expenditure had now reached \$200,000,000,000. The U.S. annual *rate of increase* had reduced somewhat with the strong anti-war sentiments, but it was \$80,000,000,000 a year and growing steadily. With the strong Nixon-Kissinger drive to boost arms sales abroad, the military factories were not idle — the U.S. accounted for 50% or more of the world arms trade. The Stockholm International Peace Institute (SIPRI) reported that global nuclear stockpile was now at least 50,000 megatons or some 15 tons of TNT for every human being in the world. SIPRI also estimated that the USA and the USSR had 70,000,000 tons of TNT or 50,000 atom bombs' power of the type dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This was exclusive of strategic weapons. World-wide military expenditure *after* World War 2, was estimated in 1975 to have been \$7,000,000,000,000.

It might be worthwhile, by way of evaluating economic priorities to consider a few numbers regarding the U.S. markets themselves. Big Business advertisers had, since inception up to 1975, spent \$54,200,000,000 on "free" TV advertising. On TV



sets alone, the American consumer had spent \$55,800,000,000. Since 1950, consumer installment debt had increased 1200% and now was \$179,000,000,000 *excluding* the most expensive of all purchases, the home. In 1974, total advertising (in major media) of baby foods was \$2,168,000; total sales were \$638,520,000. On the other hand, total major media advertising on pet foods (mainly dog food) was \$126,930,000 (or more than sixty times as much as baby food) and total sales \$1,802,330,000 (or three times the sales of baby food). Intense advertising and TV programming glorifying pets and humans who loved pets, had by now caused even the nation's poor, who lived in abject poverty, to further degrade their economic and hygienic crisis with keeping pets and buying the advertised pet foods. Studies, however, showed that they did not buy these pet foods just for their pets — many of the poor and elderly who did not have pets bought them. They were very expensive as pet foods but by now much cheaper than human food. Dr. Edward Peoples conducted a three year study and reported that about 200,000 of the American poor and elderly (on fixed income) lived on pet foods alone; 250,000 households used pet food (mainly dog food) as part of their own diet. He estimated that in all, about 33% of pet foods sold were consumed by humans, who could not afford food, meant for humans, as their regular diet.

Was Mr. Nixon justified in cutting the Health and Education budgets to the bone, vetoing much of it, yet spending as much as possible on the Military? One important source for enlivening the saturating and stagnant markets would have been to make the poor and the disenfranchised into producers and consumers. Even from the economic standpoint, this made sense. The nation was still influenced to some degree by the liberal trends of the 1960s and in the face of it, studies were now being conducted into hitherto neglected areas. The Health, Education Welfare Dept. (HEW) study of October 1975 now found that 20% of all American (16% of all white Americans) were "functionally illiterate". More than 20% lived below the poverty level, though the latest (1970) census had erroneously put it at 13%; there were an estimated 12,000,000 Americans on Welfare. Later — during Carter's administration — another study would show that 13% of high school graduates were "functionally illiterate" and even those who were considered literate were not inclined to develop skills at reading and writing fluently. The average American watched 20,000 hours of TV before he or she was 21 year of age.

Both Nixon and then Ford (the latter simply took all of Nixon's policies and went with them) insisted that Big Business must have a freer hand, that its leadership was very responsible, and its success made Americans prosperous. Both claimed that government spendings on Social Services (including Education) were upsetting the Federal budget, causing enormous borrowing, increasing interest rates and causing money to be "tight". The Military expenditures, now nearing \$100,000,000,000 a year and later to treble, were not to be questioned, however.

Awed by all the Big Business experts and their economists, the public never asked (and neither of course did media) where the money was physically going. Were the recipients of Federal aid, the poor, becoming so wealthy that they were cornering all of the nation's nearly two trillions of dollars GNP each year? The Federal deficit, of course, contributed to money being "tight". But why, then, did Mr. Nixon ignore anti-trust laws and all the epidemic of giant corporate acquisitions and mergers? The evils of monopolistic apart, did not giant acquisitions require huge "prime" borrowings from banks? It was too ordinary, too pedestrian a question to ask, it seems, when great economic theories were being flaunted. But then the formation of the mysterious combines seeking Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Netherland, Antilles and the almost uncharted

islands in the Bahamas for their ad hoc operations to rule the world of finance, to send stock markets, currencies, gold, silver and other precious metal swirling in desired directions, was also not to be questioned.

Though the terrors of recession and "possible depression" had sounded a virtual death knell eventually to consumer movement, it was not as yet quite dead. In a Ralph Nader study, it was estimated that \$125,000,000,000 was lost each year to the Income Tax treasury from tax loopholes, bribery, kickbacks. The voice of those desiring tax reform was not entirely silent; the desire for a Consumer Protection Agency at the Federal level was still pursued, though Nixon — and then Ford — vetoed such moves. Their argument was that Big Business was already being harrassed enough with regulations; what was necessary was not more watchdogs over Big Business, but less. Businessmen were responsible members of society, they said.

No doubt they were; no doubt many of the top management in very Big Business were also desirous that the American economy should improve. They owed their pre-eminence, their success to America, and should be grateful to it.

But what made them top management, in very Big Business, was their single minded devotion to the success of their conglomerate; it was a critical requirement in all senior executives that they should consider their company before anything else. Even those who have not worked in corporate life should have known that. Adam Smith, the pioneer proponent of the free enterprise system, had himself recognized this, when he warned that "the interest of the producer ought to be attended to [by government or society] only as far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer". Smith had lived in 19th century Britain; today, the complex, highly competitive world of commerce required even more singleminded devotion to their company cause from its management. Management had to eke out all the profits and growth it could to stay on its job.

In just the past few years, when inquiry into Big Business practices had been permitted, there was enormous evidence of malpractices to convince even the most sceptical that major reform was necessary. Of course in order to be convinced, one had to take the time to know the facts. In the face of such evidence, for Big Business' politicians to argue for more freedoms for Big Business, was to be so ridiculous as to be asinine. But they relied on public ignorance and its boredom towards learning facts. And it worked.

And it would work again later — with much greater abandon — under Reagan; the excesses of Nixon and Ford were, in fact, curbed to some degree by the opposition, by consumer movements, which were still not quite crushed. Under Reagan, the movement was to be strangled; the public were to give Reagan virtually a mandate to do what he pleased; and while the excesses committed under Nixon and Ford to the American economy were to provide nightmares for several years later, the blatant and flagrant excesses under Reagan may well leave the nation — and world economy — beyond repair.

It would take a volume or two to list only the more important malpractices unearthed in the previous few years; it should be remembered that this was a period when great caution would have been exercised by Big Business, with consumer awareness greater than it had ever been. We might, therefore, just consider some highlights, from just some issues that came up, which had direct bearing on public health and safety, leaving all the rest to the dedicated consumer advocates to record as they have done, for the amazement and the curses of posterity.

Between the pharmaceutical and medical insurance conglomerates, the medical



profession and their giant chain-store style hospitals and clinics, medical care was very Big Business indeed.

In 1965, medical costs in the U.S. had reached what was then considered a frighteningly high figure of \$38,900,000,000; but by 1975, it was \$125,700,000,000; this astronomical increase continued despite the efforts of Carter and his administration, increasing soon at \$1,000,000 an hour. It was estimated to have been \$200,000,000,000 in 1983.

There were undoubtedly doctors who practiced their profession with real concern and conscience, but it would not be an exaggeration to say that the practice of medicine as a noble art among dedicated healers was true only on the TV entertainment programs. Perhaps TV's obsession with the glorification of doctors had started innocently enough, to establish goodwill among that profession (as towards other professions), but also because the large majority of the masses who enjoyed daily soap operas were also apparently addicted to stories involving disease, hospitals and doctors. But later, it was no longer innocent at all. By now, TV's daily adulation of the medical profession had extended from daytime into the evening as well. The cumulative effect of all these many thousands of hours of glorification was not only upon the general public, but upon the doctors themselves, and on much of the hospital staff who also watched them devoutly.

There was the predictable result among those involved in the Big Business of Medicine; acting the role, conceit, and increasing evidence of carelessness and complacency. By now, the American Medical Association was one of the most powerful lobbies in Washington; it worked closely with other lobbies directly involved in *Status Quo* of the medical profession, the large insurance conglomerates and the pharmaceutical giants.

The U.S. was the only advanced nation without a National Health Plan. All efforts to introduce such coverage had been crushed, even as medical costs kept skyrocketing far beyond the inflation rate. Medical insurance was critical not only for the public; now doctors sought insurance too: malpractice insurance. There were an increasing number of malpractice law suits against doctors that resulted in damages; doctors got themselves insured against it, and merely added on the premium to the patients' costs. Insurance rates for the public were skyrocketing, so that, even though employers often bore part of the medical insurance through block contracts (considered a fringe benefit to the salary), the employee by now paid a substantial amount. And the insurance did not cover all medical bills, there was usually a substantial part of all legitimate expenses that the patient had to bear before insurance applied; and all too often, there were fine print exclusions.

There were millions of Americans who were not able to afford insurance, and millions more who tried to save upon the insurance premium by obtaining lesser coverages. It was a gamble. One serious illness could wipe out even an upper income household. "Upper income" began then at \$15,000 a year. The average physician in 1975-76 was earning \$60,000 a year.

Since Johnson's presidency, Medicare had been legislated into an organized dispensation for the poor. There were clearly misuses of the funds, but by far the greatest monetary misuse was by the medical profession itself. Billions of dollars were misappropriated by doctors through overprescriptions, testing, and surgery — estimates went as high as \$11,000,000,000 a year. Periodically, media exposes covered some of the private clinics which made millions for its doctor-owners through the exploitation of the poor, the illiterate and at the expense of the taxpayers, but



increasingly, media's exposés were concentrated upon the fraud by those who came upon the welfare and medicade rolls — the patients. The political power of the AMA was such that it never permitted government agencies to be involved in monitoring the profession and its clinics and hospitals; some consumer advocates felt that the AMA deliberately turned a blind eye to malpractices of the Medicare scheme by doctors, to discourage the implementation of a National Health Plan. TV networks claimed generally to be neutral on the issue, ignoring the fact that glorification of doctors in the never-ending doctor series each year on TV, was itself very powerful propaganda for the system *as it existed*; often the scripts made that point. When the proponents of a National Medical Plan began an offensive in Congress and attempted to educate the public, AMA officials, (backed of course by the pharmaceutical and insurance giants) were brought on for "balance"; somehow the latter obtained more air time on TV to tell the public that with such a national plan, the costs to the taxpayer would go up, that there would be enormous fraud (they pointed to the misuse of Medicare by the public), not enough incentive to the profession; and they waved the flag, and talked of the free enterprise system; they were sometimes able to have British expatriates tell of the problems which had made American medical profession the best in the world.

That last claim was, however, debatable. Significantly, much of the medical advances and innovations of recent years had come from foreign-born naturalized American doctors or from foreign medical practitioners. Certainly the enormous wealth poured out upon the profession, the fierce competition between medical institutions for the consumers' dollar, resulted in some lavish services — if one could afford one: There was a similar competition to get the most skilled doctors. In fact, the wide disparity between the earnings of the American practitioner and his counterpart in European countries like Britain, was one of the important reasons for the unhappiness of many of the British medical community — they saw the fortunes being made by the American doctors and some, with their tongues hanging out, migrated and some others, frustrated at being poorly paid in comparison, performed their tasks in Britain without heart. The AMA-Insurance-Pharmaceutical imagemaking strategists were working hard in Britain also, with the rest of American political influence; obviously the U.S. powers felt the demise of the British National Health Plan as the ideal solution to vanquish, forever, the efforts of the proponents of the American Plan.

In the meanwhile, the AMA openly donated vast sums to the political campaigns of Congressmen, Senators and presidential hopefuls who promised to work against such an American plan. It became so blatant that in 1978, Senator Edward Kennedy (who had, for some years led the movement for a National Health Plan, and the end to medical exploitation) disclosed the actual AMA and pharmaceutical corporation contributions to individual Congressmen and Senators and how such corruption thwarted the latest move to create a National Health Plan.

By then there were a growing number of instances when very ill patients and seriously injured patients were being turned away by private hospitals because they did not have medical insurance; some actually died because no medical help was given. Under the Carter administration, the Department of Health, Education & Welfare published the findings of a study which showed that the *average* cost of a hospital stay in 1965 was \$350; by 1977 it had become \$1,300 and expected to reach \$2,600 (at the current rates) by 1983. The HEW study disclosed that approximately \$2,000,000,000 of surgery performed each year was unnecessary; in a *Time* magazine

interview (June 12 '78), HEW Secretary Califano talked about the incredible extravagance practiced, particularly by the mammoth privately owned groups of hospitals — by now multi-billion dollar corporations were creating a form of chain-store of hospitals around the country competing with other giants: for example "Califano estimates that there are enough CAT scanners (a British invention) in Southern California to serve the entire U.S... of the 700,000 [patients] now in acute care hospitals, HEW estimates that 100,000 should not be there". In yet another aspect of medical extremism, President Carter cited the case in April 1978 of a surgeon who had deducted \$14,500 from his taxes for "entertaining other doctors on his yacht". Surgeons were by now, millionaires very quickly, and while no doubt most were very skilled, there were at least some who were willing to become careless to the extreme.

In 1976, McKay, a surgical equipment salesman, had to appear before the New York Medical Council when it had been discovered by an investigative reporter that McKay had not only been invited, (against the law) to be present during operations, by the surgeons on New York hospitals, but had actually done serious parts of the surgery *himself* at their invitation, using the equipment he sold. McKay had no medical education — in fact he was a high school dropout. His confessions (later printed in a book) revealed that for years, he would be called by surgeons to be present in the surgical theatre when the surgeons would be using the equipment he had sold (such as electric saws); according to his defence, they did not bother to read the literature to practice use of the equipment and therefore, he would often be asked to demonstrate the actual use upon the patient who was being operated; after a few such instances, he said, the surgeon routinely let him do it, while the surgeons stood by, or — in some cases — wandered off. The Medical Council never revealed the names of the many surgeons involved, so even their patients who may have been the victims of amateur surgery, could never know. The AMA was very strict about guarding the profession from "outside" interference, and doctors, as everywhere, were closer knit than the Mafia in never pointing a finger against the malpractice of another. A few dedicated doctors however, risked everything by denouncing the system as it existed. For instance, Dr. Sidney Wolf had moved out of the AMA, and despite resistance had set up a Health Reform Group, but such efforts, without extensive public support, faced an impossible task. And the public was too busy adulating the doctors in soap operas and the doctor-hospital serials.... only those who had their personal tragedies from a bad experience, felt angry.

And then there were the pharmaceutical giants. Unlike the newly qualified practitioner in other professions, the doctor was immediately wooed and deluged with gifts by the pharmaceutical giants; at the 1975 Senate Sub-committee hearings (the Watergate "morality" trend was still hot), it was revealed that in 1974 alone, U.S. pharmaceutical corporations gave, as gifts to doctors 1,456,000,000 pills or medical dosages as samples to try out, spent \$3,334,991 on tours and conventions for doctors; spent \$13,039,581 on general gifts to doctors, from golf balls to stethoscopes to auto cassette players. These gifts (aside from more extravagant, selective "PR" for a chosen few), the hard-sell by the nation's 24,000 detailmen (medical salesmen) and hard-selling literature were reasons offered why many drugs were given to patients which were either ineffective or even dangerous — the dangerous were of course not deliberately given, but without asking serious questions, or questioning weak data from the pharmaceutical corporations. The Food & Drug Administration testified that in the past 12 years it had to disqualify 21 physicians of whom two were



criminally prosecuted. It was generally conceded that with greater vigilance and in a "reform" mood, far more would have been disqualified — it must be remembered that the Nixon-Ford years began from January 1969. Despite the leniency of earlier years (prior to the growth of consumer movement's voice) the FDA had acted, from 1967 to 1975 on some matters such as the following: (i) the manufacturers of Serentil, a drug for schizophrenia and extreme alcoholism was being freely advertised for minor anxiety situations for which the manufacturers were compelled to apologise in 17 journals; (ii) 26 colitis deaths were reported "possibly or probably related" to Cleocin, an antibiotic, which physicians had reportedly prescribed 6,400,000 times in 1974 because they said, it had been vigorously promoted for "routine general use" rather than as an emergency drug for certain life-threatening diseases. Medical specialists now admitted to the Senate sub-committee that in 95% of the cases the drug should not have been prescribed; (iii) some 300 cases have been reported of people turning blind after taking a drug prescribed for rheumatic arthritis. (iv) The FDA had made pharmaceutical advertisers retract misleading campaigns on 41 occasions; (v) it had asked pharmaceutical advertisers to publish corrections to their erroneous claims 25 times; (vi) it had privately reprimended these companies 400 times; (vii) some of these corporations resisted corrective advertising; in one extreme case, at the prodding of the growing consumer movement, the FDA had seized 25 million tablets of Zorane, a birth control pill, and released them only after corrective advertising had been placed.

Now, under the force of the consumer movement, a Claim Substantiation legislation had been recently passed, requiring advertisers to provide independent studies to prove copy claims; no doubt, from the corporation's standpoint, it was often a nuisance, and many no doubt conducted their independent studies conscientiously. But what the legislatures did not realize, was that unless such independent studies were properly scrutinized, experienced researchers could easily "load" sample and word questionnaires with just that extra twist to ensure the required results. There were research houses willing to do this for the giant corporations, whose research business ran to several million dollars a year. Nevertheless, the regulation worked as a useful deterrent, when properly executed and monitored.

There were, however, about 20,000 brands of an estimated 700 basic formulations in the U.S. pharmaceutical market. Ten major conglomerates (seven American) controlled nearly 60% of the free world's pharmaceutical trade, either directly or through tentacles. Seven American giants controlled most of the U.S. trade too. In addition to the current brands, more were pouring out virtually by the week. Many were known to be ineffective. The British Halsmere Group of Medical Research had examined in 1965 all the various formulations in the British market, and judged 50% to be either ineffective or to have dangers of side effects. When products or formulations were to be banned from the U.S. and/or other Western countries, all too often such brands or formulations were exported to the Third World, heavily promoted there and usually cost more. For years the consumers — and often governments — in these countries were not aware of this practice, but now they were becoming aware and angry. It was another bone of contention against the strings of "foreign aid". The standard practice of multinationals in these countries was also to have regulations whereby if researchers of that country, working for the multinational, came up with a breakthrough of any kind, the rights to it belonged to the headquarters in the West; the product was made, and eventually marketed



everywhere, even in the country of formulation — except that in that Third World country, it usually cost more.

A macabre new — but highly profitable — trade had been discovered by an investigative reporter in Latin America. Blood plasma was in short supply in the rural areas of Latin America and in the rest of the Third World. Apparently pharmaceutical multinationals were now collecting blood from poor donors everywhere for a nominal sum, having the blood transported to a central bank, processed for the plasma then at enormous prices, resold to the areas where it was desperately needed. It was a business worth many millions, and the report said, German and Israeli companies were now also entering the very lucrative blood business.

This is not by any means to suggest that the pharmaceutical multinational had as their primary business the selling of any and every kind of service to make money, or that they deliberately sought to market ineffective, and at times, dangerous products. Perhaps the distinction must again be made. It was in the interests of the major conglomerate — pharmaceutical or any other — to maintain a good public image. It was in its own interest to try and develop truly effective products and they employed highly skilled scientists. Many of the products marketed were excellent and reliable. There were standards of quality control. But the bottom line, the primary objective was profits and growth. Whatever could be done to save costs and to sell more had to be done by the management. Stephen Leacock once said "honesty is the fear of being found out". The multinationals dreaded being found out, to get adverse publicity, for obvious reasons. So that if the monitoring by government authorities was really executed as it should have been, "checks and balances" in a free society would take care of malpractices. Without such checks, and without the deterrent of just tax laws against excessive profits, the temptation to profit by any means available was too strong. If one multinational indulged in one form of chicanery, in the secure belief that Washington was easily bought, others followed, down the line to those companies — even relatively smaller ones — which could afford such influence.

And so any chemist or researcher who may have developed a truly efficacious product for any illness would be foolish even to try to develop and market it. If it was truly an innovation, and therefore likely to destroy the mammoth shares of existing brands of the multinationals, he could at best sell it to a multinational, who would then decide whether it was advisable to market it, or to hold it for a future date, or to simply bury it, because it would be not as profitable as continuing to get the returns from existing products. After all, uniqueness did not last long — other giants would quickly develop similar formulations.

For years, consumer advocates had fought to allow pharmacists to advertise their prices and to allow generic products to be used by patients in doctors' prescription. The former could obtain for the consumer great saving because product prices varied often up to 50% between one pharmacy and another; and the highly advertised multinational brands, which doctors insisted upon even in prescriptions, were often 1000% more expensive than the generic (same formula) non-advertised product.

The attitude of the pharmaceutical giants is perhaps best illustrated with just a few examples from the very popular over-the-counter drugs marketed by the giants.

Sale of analgesic products (aspirins etc.) in the U.S. were already nearly \$1,000,000,000 per year. The National Academy of Science — National Research Council found in 1971 that the claim of Bufferin (works "twice as fast as aspirin") to be "ambiguous and misleading". The FTC (Federal Trade Commission) had also found that year that this claim "had no reasonable basis". A study also showed that

generic (unbranded) buffered aspirin dissolved just as fast as Bufferin. Bufferin also claimed in its advertising to "help prevent the stomach upset often caused by aspirin". The NAS-NRC panel found no convincing support for this claim either (in fact in 1977, the FDA said Bufferin's label should warn against its usage by people with stomach problems). Anacin advertising claimed that it was like a doctor's prescription "containing not one or two but three ingredients" (in fact aspirin, acetanilid, caffeine). "When acetanilid was shown to cause certain blood disturbances, Anacin substituted phenacetin. Later, when kidney problems were linked with the use of phenacetin, it too was dropped from the Anacin formulation" said the non-profit *Consumer Union* report. Anacin cost about six times as much as the recommended 5-grain tablet of low-cost aspirin. Exedrin went one better — it had not three but four ingredients for its very heavy advertising. The Food & Drug Administration (FDA) questioned the superiority of salicylamide (the main analgesic in Exedrin); Exedrin also had a lot of caffeine; one tablet of Exedrin had 65mg of caffeine, twice as much in fact as Anacin.

After the National Cancer Institute had found that methapyrilene caused liver cancer in rats, in 1979, the FDA recalled most of the OTC drugs which contained methapyrilene; HEW Secretary Califano announced "This substance poses a potential risk to humans". Among the products recalled were the hitherto, very heavily advertised Compoz, Exedrin P.M., Nytol, SleepEze, Sominex.

The Mayo Clinic conducted a study in 1972 to determine relative effectiveness of aspirin versus several other pain relievers, including some of the prescription products. It concluded that "among all the analgesics and narcotics available for oral use, none have been demonstrated to show a consistent advantage over aspirin for the relief of any kind of pain". The study had interesting sidelights too. It was "double-blind" (neither patients nor doctors knew which products were being used) and some of the respondents (all had headaches) were given a dummy medication. Twenty-one per cent claimed they had better than 50% relief with the *dummy* medication. It showed again how impressionable the consumer was to advertising.

Then there were the heavily advertised (\$1,000,000,000 sales a year) cough and cold medications; there were 300 formulations advertised. FDA experts had strongly recommended that words such as "cold medicine", "cold formula" or "for the relief of colds" be banned because these products could not cure, they just relieved one or more symptoms. The panel of experts said 90% of the formulations had too many ingredients and this hampered efficacy. The panel recommended that the corporations have fewer ingredients to be effective for specific ills; the problem for the makers, of course, was that the *advertising could sell several ingredients more effectively to consumers*.

Among the claims of the leading brands, there was Dristan "the decongestant most prescribed by doctors"; the decongestant was phenelhrine — and it was most prescribed as *nose drops*, not orally. Also, experts found the amount in Dristan clinically not to be effective for the purpose at all. And "the pain-relieving medication most recommended by doctors" in Dristan was aspirin. In another top seller, Contac, according to *Consumer Union* experts "the user gets too meagre a dose (of the decongestant) at any one time to be effective".

Nyquil advertising said it "relieves major cold symptoms for hours and lets you get the restful sleep your body needs". Nyquil had two ingredients to make you drowsy, but not to cure your cold symptoms; an antihistamine and 50 proof alcohol content. As Nyquil gained strongly in market share, imitators followed.



Several cough medications (sales \$30,000,000) were heavy on alcohol; Vicks VapoSteam 25%; Romilar CF 20% and so on. There were 800 OTC cough remedies on the market (100 more mixtures with doctor's prescription). Even the Journal of the American Medical Association said, "Neither practicing physicians nor (the) pharmaceutical industry can produce the objective evidence required under the law on behalf of most cough medicines". The FDA said it intended to ban twenty-five brands because of lack of evidence of their efficacy. In 1976, the FDA panel of experts concluded that none of the "expectorants" was effective and only three basic cough suppressants were both *safe* and *effective*.

No doubt there were many consumers who genuinely found these medications to work — at least partly from the hard-sell of the advertising, and partly from the medications which were likely to benefit a condition, but for many other consumers usage indiscriminately from the way they were advertised, was all too often likely to lead to ill effects (from negative reactions) or no effect.

In attempting to establish their own — and their products — credibility, corporations were not averse to using any gimmicks. For instance, in 1973, when the FTC released documents to the public of sixteen manufacturers of thirty-five cough and cold remedies, it was found that "Father John's Medicine", which advertised itself heavily with an aura of divine commitment, was not even a formula from a doctor's prescription as it implied in its advertising; and "St. Joseph's Cough Syrup for Children" which in its advertising suggested it was prepared by God-fearing hands out of love for the tiny tots, was in fact not even a formula expressly for children, according to the non-profit *Consumer Union*.

Through heavy advertising, Americans were conditioned to spend over \$400,000,000 a year on cough lozenges — the only real medical benefit from these to the cough for the consumer (soothing the throat) was that they claimed to be medicated; for the manufacturer, on the other hand, there was great benefit — they cost up to ten times as much as the average sucking candy which would serve the same purpose.

Prior to the sexual revolution set in motion by youth in the 1960s, body odors were gingerly referred to in advertising deodorant products as B.O.. Then with the changing lifestyle, came the flood of products to create new fears and wants. There was nothing fundamentally harmful about creating such awareness and satisfying the resultant wants except that it could have had deep psychological fears and concerns which may well have jeopardized, if not actually harmed, relationships.

It did however, go beyond that in several ways in the exploding deodorant market, especially the new feminine deodorants. Antiperspirants tended to clog the skin pores; also aerosol, propellant sprays were unhealthy for use in enclosed areas for the user, and for the earth's ozone layer; the enormous number of propellant sprays in deodorants and in other products were eventually banned with no disadvantage; non-aerosol sprays were designed and worked quite well providing another instance of vigilance removing — though belatedly — a hazard to life and being replaced by non-hazardous alternative with no loss.

The mushrooming variety of feminine hygiene sprays, however, were themselves a hazard, in use, as a conditioned public took to them under heavy advertising pressure and often ended up with irritation, skin rashes and swellings from use and misuse in highly sensitive areas, when good old soap and water could have worked so much better, and so much cheaper. At the height of the hype in the early 1970s, the feminine hygiene deodorant market alone exceeded \$50,000,000 a year.



Grave health hazards on a mass scale of course had already begun to be recognized through the efforts of the consumer organizations, they were in the ongoing battle with the polluting giants who had for years attempted and continued to attempt to subvert the efforts of the consumer movement. Industrial and chemical waste dumps had been allowed to be created across the nation by the giant corporations, with the government looking the other way. Rivers and deserts were made the dumping grounds for waste that was often known to be extremely hazardous from the 1950s; the atomic and hydrogen bomb testing sites were known to be radio active and breeding grounds for cancer and other diseases, yet no government action had been taken except either to deny the existence of such dangers or to make light of them, until the consumer movement grew in strength by the late 1960s; from the toxic dumps that had by then virtually solidified Lake Erie, to the radio-active hazards from the 1950s that had caused cancer in entire communities like Love Canal and in the nuclear test sites of Arizona, the pattern was emerging of indiscriminate dumping and testings by the industrial giants with no regard for public safety. Such disclosures were to continue under the probing of the consumerists and principled elected officials from time to time — and sabotaged by administrations friendly to Big Business and the Military excesses. In the “concerned” era of the 1960s and early 1970s, the Environmental Protection Agency, formed because of public outcry, had to be mindful of public anger, even when Mr. Nixon was in the White House. But that same agency, in later years, with the public now either tired or too afraid to rub Big Business the wrong way during the economic recession, was to become a blatant agent for Big Business under Mr. Reagan — as was proven from documents in the Congressional hearings in 1983, resulting in the sacrificial firing and resignations of top EPA officials (Reagan appointees) including its Director. Documents showed that the EPA under these new officials actually attempted to subvert findings of hazardous conditions created by some industrial giants, and in other instances, had the final report written (and soft pedalled) by the perpetrators (corporations) themselves, in addition to using both its funds and its actions for political aims on behalf of Republican candidates during the 1982 elections. The policy was obviously that of the White House, but like good soldiers (as in the Watergate scandals) Reagan’s EPA officials took the blame.

Did the corporate giants merely try to cover up the extent of the havoc that they had accidentally created? In some cases, no doubt that was true, but there were a growing number of revelations in later years that showed that the corporate giants had known and had deliberately withheld information either in collaboration with a friendly government in Washington, or the State government or had done so on their own. The Dow-Midland dumpings in Michigan lakes were said to be known to the Michigan State government and it dragged its feet out of concern that the corporate giant would be irritated and move its operations — and its thousands of jobs — to another state; in this case friendly Washington officials had also encouraged foot-dragging; the conglomerate would later attempt to obliterate the Toxic Substance Commission, during Carter’s regime; it failed however, and the findings were eventually brought to light. The examples are legion, but two might provide representative examples of disdain in some of these corporate giants for public safety, despite awareness of the extreme dangers.

John Manville Company was the asbestos giant in the U.S. and around the world, for many years. In 1982 it filed for bankruptcy. A few months later, its stock value in the market had *doubled*. There was a very good reason. It had filed for bankruptcy

because the current law allowed a corporation to do that to avoid paying or even to be liable for damages to 16,500 victims and families of deceased victims of asbestos poisoning.

At the earlier Congressional hearings on asbestos poisoning, it was revealed that fears about the links between asbestos and cancer had been present in Britain as far back as 1903; the British had become certain of these links by 1930, and while Britain may have shared this concern with the American government then or later, the American public had not been informed throughout the future years as buildings (including schools) were made with the fireproof material, and thousands of workers were exposed to its dangers. At the hearings, Dr. Smith, a Director of John Manville Co. claimed he had himself asked the Manville Board of Directors to consider making the hazards public, or issue a warning on the product, but this was rejected. Correspondence between Manville and other asbestos manufacturers over these years had dealt with the issue of the dangers and had decided "the less publicity the better".

The dangers of asbestos became public knowledge in the early 1970s. By then 30 million tons of asbestos had been used in the U.S. alone for industrial constructions and 1200 schools had asbestos in worn condition (prime for cancer communication). It was officially estimated that by now 125,000 Americans had died or would die from asbestos-related cancer by the end of the century. But if the asbestos companies lost the U.S. and other Western markets from such news, they still had Third World markets where the information was not generated; in fact asbestos sales continued to be aggressively pursued by the asbestos giants to the Third World — without even a warning on the product — all through the 1970s.

In the U.S., John Manville & Company were sued in 1982 by 16,500 families of those who had died and those who were now cancer sufferers; the company was accused of deliberately hiding the facts about asbestos-cancer risks for all these years. The case was apparently very strong. And so, Manville & Co., a multi-billion dollar operation, simply declared itself bankrupt. The existing law protected the corporation now from having to pay any damages; but while it declared itself bankrupt for this purpose, the peculiar law did not however restrict Manville Company from continuing its vast operations in other fields — or from even buying up other companies. Wall Street clearly saw that the company would grow even more affluent and so the share value had soared soon after it had declared itself bankrupt.

Now that this asbestos giant has used the bankruptcy law in this manner, no doubt other giant corporations, if similarly faced by lawsuits by aggrieved victims, will use the same escape law too. Unless the law is changed, it will provide yet another enticement to giant corporations to buy up smaller companies in diverse fields to provide the escape in such eventualities.

Bigness was becoming an epidemic during Mr. Nixon's regime, anyway. In all, about 4,000 mergers and acquisitions had been registered, while anti-trust (anti-monopoly) laws were put virtually into cold storage, to surface only in tokenistic form, so the government could claim they had not been put into cold storage. There were by now one out of seven businesses that went bankrupt. Not all bankruptcy petitions during this time were of the Manville variety however. Many smaller businesses were being squeezed into genuine bankruptcy. At one stage or another, they were more than willing to sell at bargain rates. In the normal course of healthy competitiveness, even this could be considered acceptable in a free enterprise system; but as we have seen, the conditions of business, the laws and government partiality were too brutally in favor of the giants.



The automobile industry were the big functioning giants, with the largest employment rolls. We need to understand their attitude — again for brevity, restricting ourselves only to aspects that were directly related to consumer health and safety. When the one-man crusade of Ralph Nader had resulted in public awareness of dangerous defects in the American automobile, the Federal Highway Traffic Safety Commission had been pressured to discontinue its old practices of whispering concerns to Detroit giants and then willy-nilly leaving it to them to make corrections. With the power of the auto lobby in Washington, however, it was not always easy to get action even after that. Yet, despite the alarming challenge from Germany and Japan, Detroit resisted the need for improving technical performance, allowing even hazards to pass along, and then recalling them only under orders from the Federal government. Once however it was clear, that Ralph Nader and other consumer advocates and some Congressmen were determined to push the federal Commission to act, Detroit itself began to recall cars when it found defects — *the fear of more bad publicity from an official Federal recall orders was very bad for business.*

In spite of these PR concerns, it often happened that the auto industry attempted to try its old ways — especially with a very friendly President in the White House. And its old habits — of trying to rely on “mood”, glamor and hard sell — persisted over the need to develop smaller cars, improve mechanical aspects, and better performance with less repairs (the Japanese and German cars were far cheaper to maintain and with far fewer incidents of repair needs). By 1977 a total of 10,700,000 American cars had been recalled at the order of the Federal Safety Commission or voluntarily. In the meanwhile, foreign car sales were skyrocketing. Yet General Motors made record profits. How? Having increased the sale prices to match the increase in price of the foreign cars, loaded now with heavier duties. In 1974, GM’s declared profits were \$950 million. In 1975, the “recession” panic year GM’s profits were \$1,253 million. When sales fell, the auto companies simply closed down plants or laid off workers. What they sold, they sold at enormous profit per unit — foreign car prices, with dollar devaluation and higher duties, had increased over forty percent and American auto makers had also shot up their prices.

But the American buyer was finding the foreign cars not only better mechanically and much cheaper on gas, but also much cheaper to maintain. In 1978, auto repair scandals were to surface at a sub-committee in Congress. It was then estimated that about \$80,000,000,000 were spent on repairs yearly by auto owners in the U.S., and also that of this, \$2,000,000,000 were unnecessary repairs, or originally faulty manufacture mistakes, which, despite the guarantees had not been met by the manufacturers or auto dealers. Another \$2,000,000,000 wastage was from entire sections having to be replaced, because manufacturers had not considered the replacement problem for a small part. There were many testimonies about the horrors faced by owners who had risked their lives through defects that took months, even years to correct. In the meanwhile, the auto makers were selling “mood” — they spent \$499,000,000 in advertising in 1978 themselves and another \$200,000,000 for dealer advertising.

But when it came to making a correction in the Pinto, for \$5-\$11 extra cost per car, internal memos were to show at the Court hearings that the Ford executives decided it would be cheaper to pay for any court cases resulting from injuries or death of Pinto owners, rather than to spend that \$5-\$11 per car on correcting (or later recalling and correcting) the location of the gas tank. A former Vice-President at



Ford, was to say on ABC-TV's 20-20 program, "If Government does not enact, change will not come".

In a similar instance with auto tires, The Firestone Tire Company had been forced to recall its radial tires in 1978, after it was found that 13,000,000 of them had burst with resulting accidents, even death; and there was evidence that the Firestone executives had known about the defect in their radials even before they were marketed.

To sum up, therefore, in the aftermath of Watergate, the public needed to understand the enormity of the dangers and the destructive aspects of indiscriminate Bigness to the economy, to society, to democracy itself. Ironically, the very big conglomerate empires were not unlike the Communist State; both demanded strict regimentation; both had made themselves into revered godheads; and while both claimed to be impersonal institutions, they were in fact the sum total of the attitudes and beliefs of their High Priests; the subjects were required to merge their own attitudes and beliefs entirely to these, and to total loyalty to the godhead in order to seek its benediction.

The American public needed critically to turn away from the conditioning of previous years and to realize that while Bigness had served — and still served — a useful purpose, indiscriminate Bigness was corruptive socially, politically and economically, for the nation.

Many Americans, even without knowing all the ramifications, had come to question much of Big Business domination over the government and their own lives; what deterred real action however, was not only the terror instilled by Big Business and its politicians of impending recession and loss of jobs; deep within, the average American still stored the old appeal of reflected glory instilled into him by media over the decades. Americans for the most part, had been Europe's poor and submerged. The relative prosperity, in the same generation, in the U.S. was a great boon. They were grateful. They were still *feudal*. Also, the glories of the American Business empires were the glories of the average American; if he or she could not win, at least they could take pride in the mighty commercial empires of other Americans. The larger the empire, the more it dominated around the world, the more pride the average American could take. In a similar vein, even the excesses of neo-colonialism committed by the U.S. government in recent years were, to many Americans, objectionable but with a certain appeal; the excesses, the domination pointed to America as being the overlord, the No. 1. There was a powerful flavor in it, the flavor of winning. It is a very human condition of living in reflected glory, of wanting to win, of being No. 1. But in the U.S. it had reached alarming proportions. It began early, in the indoctrination on the playing fields.

(v)

The American, in the Watergate era, was (if we can be objective) shocked, chastened and frightened; the super-gloss of chauvinism had cracked, with the cumulative jolts of the black and youth revolt, the exposés about a venerated presidency and hallowed institutions, above all by the humiliations of defeat in Vietnam and the sudden discovery that "American know-how" was no longer all that

supreme, that it could be challenged if not overtaken by others, especially the Germans and the Japanese, the vanquished of World War 2. There were also the traumas in personal life; the torn homes from the "generation gap", the uncertainties of how to imbibe the changing mores of the emerging "cultural revolution" that was being pressured by media, and the stark fears of the nation's economy, the possible loss of jobs, the failure to make instalment payments, the reposessions....

The average American was still hardy, resilient. That had been proven by Democracy In Action during the unravelling of Watergate, and its verdict. But there was real danger in the softer side, the bruised ego, nurtured and fed by commercial interests so long. The American had come to expect victory at all times, not defeat, not pain.

The addict needed the fix. It could be argued that at times like this, when morale is very low, it is necessary to apply balm to the bruised ego. No doubt balm was necessary, but with it, there was *greater* need to use the psychological moment to pursue the issues of "where did we go wrong?" about the public itself. It could be painful, but locating a cancerous wound and treating it can never be painless. The fix, on the other hand, perpetuated the disease.

There were all of the destructive traits and influences that commercial media, notably commercial TV, had ingrained into the average American, remolding the American character to its own requirement. And, at a time when the bruised ego, unused to defeat and humiliation, was screaming for a fix, it was critical to recognize the dangers; the true friend would have been willing to risk hostility and anger from the patient, by forcing the harsh reality of the problem upon him: that he had become obsessed with success, with winning, and such obsession could be very dangerous in the reality of today's world, which was not and could not be made in the fantasy image of commercial TV.

The competitive spirit had always been strong in America, among individuals and as groups. That was fine, healthy, productive. But like anything else, excesses can be harmful. Great excesses can be greatly harmful. In the intensely dog-eat-dog milieu of the cities, it was by now almost traditional to live by rules such as "get the other guy before he gets you", being "smart" was to be cunning, and success was the ultimate virtue. This was why even gangsters of the 1920s and 1930s had come to be admired members of society often, and why many of Nixon's admirers, even those who knew of his "Tricky Dicky" characteristics, had come to admire him for those very qualities. Nixon and Kissinger were tricky and cunning so they were felt to be the best experts in foreign policy because they knew how to handle all those rotten foreign "they" and win for our team. Media implied it, even when it did not actually say so. It was also one important reason why Big Business corruption, even when known, could be secretly admired.

In the Watergate era, the desire for "morality in government" fought gamely with the growing desire to win, to be "No. 1" in all things, and lasted only to allow Jimmy Carter to narrowly get elected; but then, he did not deliver victory of the type the national ego desired, his morality was itself accused of being the impediment. Ronald Reagan was viewed as having no such impediment. He could win for America, make it "No. 1" again in all things.

The nation's genuinely moral, traditional fibre was never more in jeopardy than in the frustrated bruised times following Watergate and economic ills. The public's moral indignation was sincere, but the public needed to be warned of the other psychological pressures, to be cautioned against expecting past supremacy to



continue, advised to accept a changing world, correct the distortive image of foreign countries and be more realistic in evaluating itself.

Who would do it? Exploitative commercial media and self-serving politicians were to see in that greater thirst for self-glorification far more profits than the unpleasant, unpopular attempt to be critical of the public with an eye to the future of the nation. Even the more responsible elements in media — as Ben Bradlee of the Washington Post had written to this writer — did not see why it was so important.

It began early, that inculcation to win. And it was pushed into the very heartbeat of the average American from early school years, at those who played sports and those who identified with (lived in reflected glory of) those who played sports. Win even if it is necessary to win *by any means*. It did not end there. It had become, under Big Business and commercial media control of sports, a national frenzy for victory for oneself, for one's side, whether local, national or international, in sports and then in every aspect of life. "Winning" said Vince Lombardi, the much revered football coach and legendary hero "is not everything. It is the *only* thing". Another coach and national folk hero, Leo Deroche said, "Nice guys finish last". There dictums, repeated incalculable times by media, were known to every man, woman and child.

It is true that in a free society productivity improves with competition, (up to a point) and there is more fierce competition especially when that society is very rich. It is also true that such obsessive involvement with winning prevails around the world. Winning, after all, is fun; identifying with a team, rooting it to victory, even being despondent over its defeat, is charged with excitement and often with good fellowship. As American media would often highlight (for obvious reasons) soccer fans in particular in many countries, were apt to erupt in mob scenes, even violence. And World Cup winning nations would sometimes celebrate for days on end.

However, character was once said to be formed on the playing fields at Eton, and elsewhere where British influence was strong. Though at least some of the colonized countries had their own such traditions, it was one of the very useful British legacies to the colonized lands. At its best that spirit of fairplay was much more than social coercion. It involved an indescribable, deep satisfaction within the individual. But if Britain could once justly be proud of that spirit of fairplay (at least on the sporting field), there was growing evidence that the spirit was ebbing fast in Britain too.

There were many countries, no doubt where rules of fairplay were much worse, especially in mass-oriented sports; but in the U.S., despite everything still the leader of the free world, standards had to be set for others to follow (copy the good, not be evil, from the Old World, the founders had said); second, while some of the developing countries might greatly need the occasional morale boost of victory at some sports, the U.S. had by now too many victories to have to be so obsessed with it; third, the hysteria that Big Business media generated in sports had taken the obsession with winning to new heights, and Big Business was now corrupting sports in other nations in the same style; and fourth, the objective to win *by any means* was now being applied all too often.

"Winning isn't everything, it is the only thing" said Vince Lombardi the folk hero Green Bay Packers coach. It was tragic enough that such an attitude should prevail in sports but that inculcation had spread among the extremists at least to other pursuits through life. Farfetched? On the walls of Nixon's White House were posters, with the message "*Winning at politics isn't everything. It is the only thing.*"

Sensitive though it is therefore, we must examine the trends of Big Business sports and its ramifications for the American people in the post-Watergate era.



Sports were very Big Business even in the mid 1970s. In just the three major ball game leagues alone, the three commercial TV networks soon garnered between themselves the rights to televising the pro ball games — the NFL (National Football League) was paid \$650,000,000 for the TV rights, (American Football League would be on another network), the Baseball League got \$24,000,000 and Basketball League got \$20,000,000. Promoters and team owners made more fortunes from gate money, promotions, concessions to vendors, etc. The star players made over \$1,000,000 in contracts, advertising (testimonial commercials) etc.

The TV networks paid all this money because they could make a great deal more. In order that the TV networks and local stations could make the big money they could on sports, it was critical of course that the public should be kept in a fever pitch of excitement not only during the ball games but before and after; the public must identify totally with one team. Every one of the nation's more than 200 commercial TV stations had highly paid sports commentators (usually former players) who kept the hype going — with suitable gossip, or with hilarity when the home team won and despair when it lost ("the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat" as one network said each week). There were times when the entire news team would seem as if they were in mourning when this happened. There were angry comments of wrong decisions by referees when the team lost; chortling when such "questionable" decisions were made in favor of the home team. Then they read off all the scores — Americans were soon betting \$100,000,000 a week on pro football alone. Sportscasters were highly paid — one of the New York sportscasters was now reported to be on a \$750,000 a year contract.

The American "ball game" teams were owned by individuals or syndicates (showbiz personalities like Bob Hope owned teams). Players could be bought and sold from one team to another. Teams were named after individual American states or cities but neither the owners nor the players, coaches and other personnel had to be from that state or city. Yet the entire citizenry of a state or city could be hyped to root feverishly for the team bearing the name of their city or state, to celebrate wildly when they won, to cry, drink themselves to a stupor or to vandalism when they lost. Imitation had been so well engineered over the years that watching a "ball" game on TV with the beer six-pack by the side had been established as the most manly occupation there was. You could not be an All-American guy if you did not. Besides, for the corporate executive staff there was "Monday morning quarter-backing" when you reviewed the Sunday games and — even if you had never played the game yourself ever — you gave your opinion on how it could have been played better. Such discussions were often the preliminaries at corporate conferences, even at interviews for corporate positions. A fierce devotion to a "home team" and a passionate desire to see it win by any means, was a highly desirable trait — it meant that one was a keen "team player" and would fight equally hard to make the corporation win by any means.

TV now charged as much as \$230,000 per 30 sec. to advertisers on football's top rated Super Bowl (it charged a lot more later). In addition to the NFL and AFL, there were more football specials. There were many other "bowls", such as extravaganzas through the Christmas and New Year weekends — like Sun Bowl, Peach Bowl, Fiesta Bowl, Gator Bowl, Bluebonnet Bowl, Tangerine Bowl. In games such as the Super Bowl, as much as 50-60 minutes of advertising sales were possible, because the whole extravaganza had been suitably extended to stretch as long as possible, up to six or seven hours, from the pre-game shows onwards. Even the rules of football had been

changed so that every action was followed by a lot of inaction\*. At half time, there was a mammoth carnival-style show — brass bands, pom-pom girls (cheerleaders) and so on.

It began early for the would-be pro player. The "killer instinct" had to be ingrained from early boyhood. Reports frequently surfaced of a particularly brutal "Little League" coach who terrorized the ten and eleven year olds, disgraced them collectively and individually if they lost — as did some parents. The more promising players were the source of fierce competition between colleges, the incentives offered including free tuition, luxury car and accommodations, and often freedom from class studies. College football and basketball were on network TV, so very Big Money was involved. As part of developing the "killer instinct", it was critical to have the players not just totally consumed with the yearning to win, but to win by any means, by every form of chicanery. Psychologists had to instil that single-minded thirst. It was almost traditional by now in pro games, for each player to use every trick, then to fight every adverse decision of the referee, or with opponents, usually by words, gestures and spits, occasionally with fists (in Ice hockey, most often with the hands and sticks). TV cameras usually tried to stay away from the very rough action — it was bad for the image, except in ice hockey where it was one of the attractions — but sometimes they could not avoid it. There were to be assault cases even filed in court by spectators who had been beaten up by players. In 1978, Woody Hayes, one of the all-time legends among football coaches (coach of Ohio State University), went beyond screaming expletives at the referee and opponents. A player of the opposing team made a brilliant winning pass; this so angered Hayes that he ran from the sideline to the player and punched him up. It was live TV, so clearly, disciplinary action was essential. Hayes was sacked, but not ostracized. The TV and print sportcasters provided very flattering comments about the sad loss to football of this great coach, and it was all said to be leading to a very attractive offer from Hollywood to do a biography of the living legend.

The main attraction in some other highly popular spectator sports, like ice hockey and "roller derby", was the fights (with sticks in hockey, with bare hands in roller derby); growing brutality in boxing in the ring was matched, if not exceeded, but the blatantly biased decisions of the judges on special occasions, especially when a foreigner was fighting an American favorite, with one exception: while he enjoyed adulation among many million, the legendary Mohamed Ali was the secret target of hate of many others.

Other big money sports like golf did not have physical brutality; the image of golf and skiing was "elite" — sometimes the TV commentators got so carried away with this image that they whispered almost inaudibly. Golf, after all, was now no longer just a game, it was a critical part of an executive's schedule. President Eisenhower took up golf — and churchgoing — after becoming President, presumably because both were considered important for his image. It would be hard to tell how much of Bob Hope's image depended upon his excellent delivery of his stables' jokes, how much upon his "Christmas Shows" ("Over There") and how much to the fact that he played golf with Eisenhower, Nixon and Ford, and made sure the public knew this each time he was on a talk show.

\* Prof. Michael Real (*Mass Media Society*) said he had carefully timed the actual play on one four-hour Super Bowl and it was seven minutes.



Politics and jingoism were ingrained in international sports, as no doubt they were in other countries (significantly the most popular spectator sports in the U.S., the three ball games, were adaptations of international sports but were far enough removed to have no international challenge except from neighboring Canada, Russia in basketball after the 1976 Olympics and Japan in baseball).

When, in 1972, American Bobby Fischer took the world chess title from Russia's Boris Sparskey, it was — as world press reported daily during the shabby encounter — with some of the most brazenly unsporting tactics ever seen in chess. Sparskey, the world press said, had been a gentleman throughout though clearly exasperated by Fischer's antics and tantrums. It was a situation in which American — and Democracy's — true interests lay in denouncing Fischer's behavior. Instead Fischer's "victory" was greeted by media and politicians with great applause; Fischer in fact received the highest of accolades — a ticker tape parade across Manhattan in the company of the New York Mayor and the cheers of many hundreds of thousands. Significantly, a passion for chess enveloped the U.S. thereafter....

The Cold War raged at the Summer and Winter Olympics every two years even more fiercely after "detente" than before, because media hype was more skilled now than in the 1950s. The communists and American participants were put through gruelling physical and mental training for years before the Olympics, and no doubt the communists put their selected participants through even greater regimentation. Did it mean that all the while American media had to focus and insist that this Russian regimentation made the difference? Soon we were at the stage where the communists were cornering so many of the gold medals that there were even suggestions that the U.S. should withdraw from the Olympics. In the Winter Olympics, Europeans and the communists did very well — wild charges became commonplace and Washington Star's David Israel (February 1976), after a lengthy tirade, urged that the U.S. should withdraw because of "unfair" competition. Yet coaches from communist countries were steadily brought into the U.S. throughout the 1970s — in events ranging from gymnastics to skiing to weight lifting.

It could all be clear, if one looked for a built-in corollary to the belief that "Winning is the only thing": it was that one should always be a bad loser — otherwise the "killer instinct" could be marred. It also meant working assiduously to make conditions as favorable for oneself and unfavorable for the opponent as possible, and forcing umpiring decisions in one's favor by any means. "Nice guys finish last", said Leo Deroche, the other American football legend.

There were Americans who were very concerned with this unnatural obsession with winning, especially when it had reached the stage where pre-teen youngsters were shouted at, bullied, even terrorized by grammar school coaches if they did not perform i.e., win. Knowing how vulnerable this made its own role, commercial TV naturally jumped on the bandwagon with its own "concerns" about the obsession with winning, a classic — or impudent — case of attack being the best form of defence.

The plain fact is that TV's own role in creating this obsession should never be in doubt. The creation of the tennis "explosion" and the subsequent bastardization of that sport, presents perhaps the best proof of TV's role and needs to be examined in some detail here. And it is all easy to prove if one has kept assiduous notes and some tapes of the progression (or regression). We might consider just a very few examples from such notes. It is important to do that to make the point beyond argument.

The "tennis explosion" can be said to have been launched during the Watergate traumas, following the highly publicized and fiercely promoted "Battle of the Sexes",



between women's tennis champion Billie Jean King and 55 year old former tennis star Bobby Riggs, in 1974. King won the carnival\* and the interest in tennis which had been growing suddenly became an "explosion".

It would be impossible to tell just which of the several elements contributed the most to it; the ego lift to women that a woman could beat a man (even an elderly one). This ego lift was quite understandable at a time when women were struggling for equality. There was also the built-in attraction of an "elite" sport in a period when the "cultural explosion" was surfacing; wearing attractive tennis outfits, the boy-meets-girl appeal (especially with women now taking to it in large droves) all undoubtedly contributed so that by the time TV announced that, in fact there was a "tennis explosion", those who may have been self-consciously hesitant made the leap into the latest fad. The fact that since 1968, the players had opened the door to commercial interests — the proverbial tennis star 'bums' of the past and Big Business — helped make the explosion into a national commercial phenomenon.

There had been the tennis champions becoming part of the small performing professional troupe for many years in the U.S. When Jack Kramer had turned professional in the late 1940s, first under the Bing Crosby troupe, then with fellow huckster Bobby Riggs, professional tennis grew, but because the Kramer troupe attempted to tempt each amateur Wimbledon Champion, many national tennis associations around the world treated him with contempt and hostility, as did some media. In 1958, for instance, one British paper wrote, "Keep away from our kids, Kramer" in its headline, called him tennis' Public Enemy No. 1, and said among other things that "now the man who was born in money-mad Las Vegas again brings Wall Street to Wimbledon".

In 1968, however, Wimbledon agreed to include professionals in the championships. That opened the door for big money hucksters; top players were cornered in contracts by operators like Lamar Hunt and Dave Dixon (WCT), George McCall, and players led by Arthur Ashe formed the International Men's Players Professional Council, placing Kramer as its Executive Director, with former members of the Kramer group like Barry McKay, Vic Braden, Tony Trabert; Donald Dell, a lawyer became an agent, first for Ashe, then garnered many top players; there was power play, rivalry, then they pressured major championships to create the Grand Prix circuit (sponsored by Pepsi Cola to start with in 1970); the national tennis associations in various countries were further weakened when the players' Council boycotted Wimbledon in 1973. They had by then set up dozens of year-round tournaments between Grand Prix and WCT, changed national championship schedules (like the Australian) now part of Grand Prix, worked out deals with TV networks, set up their own TV cable arrangements and magazines; many of the hucksters not only gained control over the national championships as a result but organized their own tournaments on the circuit under the umbrella of Grand Prix or WCT.

The TV networks, aside from the contracts for these tournaments, in the meanwhile, were, working out their own hype, such as the Riggs-King carnival, then

\* Watching the encounter from the Club lounge at the Watergate complex in Emeryville, Ca, (where Billy Jean King also had an apartment), the fiercely emotional pro-King reactions of the women appeared to be motivated by a desire for victory for a neighbor and possible friend. But soon it was clear that women across America, including the vast majority (then), who knew nothing of tennis, shared King's victory as a personal triumph. The intense ABC-TV network promotion of the *Battle of the Sexes* had paid off far beyond the network's own expectation.

the "World No. 1" challenge between Connors and Newcombe, then Connors versus Laver, at Las Vegas (Connors was reportedly paid \$500,000 by CBS TV for each). In the meanwhile, the Association of Tennis Professionals were developing via the ATP Committee Computer, the biggest ongoing hype for the fans — the tennis rankings.

"We've always had [in the past] the wrong motives — if for no other reason than that the basic profit motive was considered evil" says Jack Kramer in his book (*The Game*, Putnam, 1979). "That is why I am so pleased with the influx of new boosters who have come to the sport since it went open. They came from more *normally* run sports — baseball, football, basketball — where the officials are more interested in making things work and *making a buck* than they are in playing the sport themselves." No comment is necessary; the italics have been added for emphasis. Kramer admits in his book that a few of his own pro circuit matches of the past were rigged, (fixed) to get public interest. But, he says, because he admits to those being fixed, the rest were not.

The players were delirious — the top players were soon making well over \$1,000,000 a year, from prize money, giving their names to racquet and tennis gear manufacturers and from commercials. There was one way to have all that money keep coming in — to win, win, win. They got themselves managers, trainers, psychologists and formed themselves into corporations.

In the initial period, to tennis lovers, it was very heartening to see the incredible surge in the sport's popularity, especially when this meant that there would be a great deal of TV coverage to the sport. After all, why should not these very talented players make a lot of money? Even with hucksters and Big Business it might all make tennis more popular than it was. King, who had fought for more money for women, was forming a Ball Game League out of tennis and top women players who were making millions too. Major conglomerates sponsored major tournaments — and major tournaments on the circuits grew to accomodate more sponsors by leaps and bounds each year. By now, commercial TV networks bid for and took coverage over most of tennis from PBS, the non-commercial network. All the danger signals were there but one felt somehow that the balance of good versus bad would hold, especially when tennis courts and tennis clubs began to spring up wherever there was room and thereby provide facilities and services a lot more than one could get before. But very quickly it was clear that bastardization was on the way.

The commercial TV networks employed their "ball game" commentators for the job of covering tennis but also picked Bud Collins, a Boston Globe sports writer, who previously had commented on PBS tennis coverage with Donald Dell, former Davis Cup player, now promoter. Both Collins and Dell made their "patriotism" very clear for the benefit of the millions of new tennis enthusiasts who were of course also "ball game" fans. Dell was more sober, more likely (outwardly at least) to be fair when an American played a foreigner. Collins was not. Collins' popularity clearly grew as he emotionally cheered all American victories and moaned their defeats, usually with many suitable excuses. TV's ball game fulltimers (e.g. CBS's Pat Summerall and NBC's Jim Simpson) joined in sometimes to comment a la football, otherwise restricted their comments to plugging the sponsors and their products, repeating the prize money ad nauseum, and generally flattering the American stars and passing some negative comments about the foreign players. Former tennis player Tony Trabert (he was soon to act in a movie) was by then drumming up national patriotism and lamenting on broadcast media that in foreign countries the crowds were very partisan, whereas American crowds were not being sufficiently supportive of American



players! Soon he was a regular TV commentator at tennis matches and soon after that the new Captain of the U.S. Davis team.

Print media and local TV stations were now into a crash session to get their sports reporters learn enough about tennis to make suitable comments. The fundamentals were not difficult of course — if an American top star lost you gave excuses and if a foreign topflight star was defeated, you screamed with joy through your lungs or the typewriter.

Collins, Trabert et al concentrated on the "hackers", the vast new market of tennis beginners (and the largest segment of the TV audience). Tips on how to play and what tactics to employ were most important consideration in commentaries. And these experts supplied emphatic tips on how the tennis newcomers should conduct themselves on the court. For example, at the Fireman's Open in San Francisco, 1975, Jeff Borrowiac an American with a rare sporting spirit played Vilas (Argentina) in the finals, there were several bad line calls against Vilas. One was so blatant that Borrowiac argued the case *against* himself and got the umpire to over-rule the linesman's bad call. In the commentator's box, Collins was furious. He severely criticized Borrowiac for arguing a point in favor of his opponent; he talked of this for several minutes. Then, when he interviewed Borrowiac after the match (which Vilas won) Collins castigated him for arguing to give a point to his opponent. Such was the atmosphere created that Borrowiac sounded apologetic as he weakly defended his action. No doubt the millions of youngsters and "hackers" watching learnt an important lesson taught to them by Collins, the expert.

Steadily the "doubtful" line calls against foreigners, especially when they played American favorites (like Jimmy Connors), increased and steadily TV experts expressed outrage that players should be arguing against line calls at all — only on rare occasions did they allow that the call against a foreigner may have been wrong. When they did they made light of it. American favorites like Connors and Billie Jean King used the nationality bias to the full, always in important matches; their own outbursts against linesmen and lineswomen (often new to the game) in the early stages of the match set the right mood of intimidation towards the officials and countered any claims opponents might make later about bad calls directed against the unfortunate opponents — as there usually would be, at critical moments.

Newcomers and hackers watched all this. So did promising youngsters who would soon burst on the tennis circuit and become top stars, such as John McEnroe... In the heightened morality of Watergate, these tendencies and their consequences should have been noted, cured. Instead they were allowed to grow.

In the meanwhile, Billie Jean King had succeeded in overcoming all opposition to what she apparently wanted most of all — "Team Tennis" in which (as in ball games) teams would be created with a city or state name, top stars employed (American and foreigners) and a league battle would be fought. Big money was paid because the format allowed for many games and as in football, baseball and basketball, the thirst to have the team named after one's city or state win (even if it consisted of no one actually from the area) would be immense. As "Team Tennis" began, promoters (among them King) were allowed TV airtime to plug it to entreat the audiences to come and shout and scream for their "home team". The courts for these matches were specially made — indoor and jazzed up in multicolors, even the scoring system was simplified so that those not familiar with tennis could follow. They came in large numbers, yelled for their team, abused the opponents often, threw rubbish and enjoyed themselves.



As part of the incentive to watch regular tennis, TV expert commentators continued to provide tips for newcomers. Some of the tips were clearly very useful on how strokes were made. But frequently they provided different types of tips. For instance, on July 25 1977, Kim Prince, one of the TV experts provided a "special tip", in a match between Vilas (Argentina) and Gottfreid (U.S.). Vilas was winning handily and with a record number of victories that year seemingly unbeatable. It had been raining earlier and since Vilas habitually slid a lot on clay courts and the surface with the rain was already wet, Prince felt that Gottfreid should deliberately mess up the court at the base line area as Vilas generally played from the baseline. No doubt newcomers noted this important tip on winning.

Connors gave his own lesson once in smudging the courts. On Sept. 10, 1977, while playing Barazutti (Italy), one of Connors' shots was so obviously out that there should never have been any doubt at all. The linesman, however, elected to say Connors' shot was "in". Barazutti argued (it was a close match) politely, asking for the lineman to come and examine the surface (the U.S. Open was still being played on clay at the time and ball marks remained for a while). The linesman was reluctant to come. Barazutti appealed to the umpire Jack Stahr. While this was going on, Connors ran over from his court, gleefully rubbed his shoes on the spot where the ball had landed and ran back. The crowd laughed and applauded, the umpire fondly said to Connors that he was being "naughty"; he said he knew Connors did not mean anything by it but asked him not to do it again, gave the point to Connors. A dejected Barazutti lost a close set to Connors. Then, a Connors stroke, in the early stages of the next set, was given "out", the Italian challenged that call, *against* himself and got the decision reversed, giving Connors the point. It was a heartwarming piece of sportsmanship, but no one can be indulgent indefinitely and in the future it was clear that Barazutti had learnt the "new rules".

Connors provided another "tip" for newcomers in the finals of that U.S. Open, with the endorsement of the TV experts. Vilas beat Connors in the finals. Breaking with "tradition", Tony Trabert spoke often and feelingly about one line call. Needless to add, the "bad call" questioned by Trabert was against Connors — both he and Summerall ignored the many "doubtful" calls (as they called them) throughout the match against Vilas. Then Connors, upset at losing, set a new precedent — accompanied by his mother he left before the prize distribution. The TV experts' reaction? "You cannot blame him" mourned Pat Summerall.

In fairness it must be said that occasionally, bad line calls and umpiring were the result, no doubt, of enthusiasm and inexperience, and some questioned calls may not have been wrong. But bad calls were, by now, so frequent that just about most foreign players learnt they had to object, to appeal, to argue. Some players argued a lot and had angry tantrums. Some attempted to make their own strategies to fight the partiality *before* it started (as Ilya Nastase did). The TV experts uniformly criticized players (especially foreign players) when they argued — they conceded on occasions that the call may have been "doubtful" but that was it. As no major source of communication other than commercial media was available, no hue and cry could be raised by any of the victims. Most foreign players in fact were most reluctant to raise any major controversy except to argue each time on the court — all said and done, they wanted to compete in the U.S, where most of the big-money tournaments were held and the money was Big. In private, at least some were more than willing to express their indignation, but hastened to add they would not do so in public.

It is impossible to relate many examples here, so we might consider just a few

instances from *one* tournament and just one example of a variety of "doubtful" calls: the 1978 U.S. Open was now played on an artificial surface (astroturf) on which Connors and some other American players had been brought up, but which was wholly new and uncomfortable to foreigners. In deference to TV's requirements of large home audiences, the timings of many matches were kept late (after office hours). Even the finals, hereafter, was to be played under lights and *more time* between changing court ends so that more commercials could be aired.

1. *The Salt on the Wound* approach: Pannatta (Italy) had several "doubtful" line calls against him in a very close match against Connors. Then, in the fifth set at 5-6, Pannatta served three consecutive fiery first serves, each of which was given "fault". Even a large segment of the American crowd voiced shock and dismay at the calls. Normally when bad calls were given against his opponent, Connors tended to rush through with the next point. This time he chose to go and wipe his racket on a towel — a procedure usually disallowed and even more infuriating to the unhappy Pannatta. The latter then went on to serve another big first serve, called out, then a powerful (and remarkably fast) second serve. The linesman insisted this was out too — double fault, game set and match to Connors. One foreign daily did report the final segment: "The Italian finally slammed down two gigantic serves *which appeared to brush the line*. The instant applause of the 15,000 spectators died away, however, as the line judge called both serves 'out'. It was a tragic ending to what had been a superb match".
2. *The Footfault Ending*: Patterson (South Africa) seemed set for victory over Gerulitus (U.S.) at 5-4 in the final set, with his own serve now. But out of the blue he was footfaulted. He argued, pointing to where he had stood, upset; totally losing his concentration (after losing his temper) Patterson played without any spirit and lost the service game and then the match.
3. *Silence is Dissent*: Borg playing Gerulitus in the semi-finals, served a winner. The linesman did not challenge it, neither did Gerulitus. But the umpire decided, *without* raising the issue even with the lines officials, that it was a "fault". The linesman gestured angrily that it was "good", but was ignored.
4. *Bitching Pays*: In women's doubles, Billie Jean King and Navratilova were playing Australians Reid and Turnbull. King began early to complain against line calls, and almost each time she did, the umpire over-ruled the linesperson and gave King the point. The Australians grew more exasperated each time but remained quiet. Then King challenged a call after a game had *ended* and had been won by the Australians. They had already changed ends. The umpire, however, dutifully obeyed King's challenge and asked the players to return to the former courts and continue that game with the point going to King. After more calls had been reversed in King's favor, the Australians lost their temper and asked the umpire why she changed calls and decisions everytime their opponents "bitched". The lady umpire asked them to be quiet and continue play.

When is a boil not a boil? When TV experts decide that it is not — or is, depending on who has it. At stake was that most profitable of all issues that promoters and TV never allowed to be off audiences' minds: who was the World's No. 1? Not only were enormous fortunes at stake (a close controversy kept audience interest alive) but an American had to be No. 1 — even if a nuisance Swede kept making the claim more ludicrous every passing month. An American "No. 1" meant a sizeable difference in audience size in any sport.



Connors was labelled "World's No. 1" informally by media all through 1974. There is of course, no doubt that he was — and is — a very talented and topflight player. But that year, Vilas (Argentina) had won a record number of tournaments, registered a record of fifty-odd straight victories and reached the Grand Prix Masters final tournament (held that year in Australia) on points far ahead of anyone else (he would do even better in 1977). By the rules even if he had not won the Masters finals, he would still be the Grand Prix circuit champion. Connors barely managed to have enough points to be eligible for the Masters finals. Then he elected not to play at the last moment — causing the Australian authorities to threaten disciplinary action. Vilas won the finals, too. U.S. media elected to ignore all that. Promoters and CBS-TV worked out a Men's carnival — between Connors and John Newcombe, at Las Vegas, with \$1 million in stake money, to determine who was "World's No. 1" between them. Connors won, and claimed — with media — that he was No. 1. It had been a very profitable carnival for promoters and TV so another "challenge" was set up, this time between aging Rod Laver and Connors also at Las Vegas with \$1 million in stake. Connors won and all America was convinced by media that he was indeed "No. 1". Vilas in the meanwhile developed stomach problems and was to be absent from the circuit for the better part of the following season.

But by then, 17 year old Borg was making history. In the WCT finals against Arthur Ashe in 1974, the teenager faced several calls against him, eventually so blatant that at times his eyes suddenly filled with tears. In some ways, these early traumas no doubt fitted him to adjust his temperament because from the following year, he became cool and seemingly unemotional no matter how blatant the calls against him, even when they came at very crucial stages. Media dubbed him "Ice Borg" and foreign media dutifully copied the label and characterization of a cold, unemotional player. At least *that* could be held against him, because aside from his sensational tennis, young Borg was a complete gentleman on the courts. Then came his winning streaks — Wimbledon each year from 1976 onwards, among other top titles, a winning streak of 49 matches in a row (in 1978 he was to trounce Connors at Wimbledon easily). That year he had also won the French, and Australian and was about to complete the rare Grand Slam if he took the U.S. But it was at the U.S. that he could never win — illhealth, unfavorable conditions of play, (court of synthetic astroturf, to play at night) and line calls got him each time. At that same 1978 U.S. Open that we have taken as an example, it was the Boil.

In the U.S. Open semi-finals Borg developed a nasty boil on his playing right hand palm. Hurried treatment did not help and he had decided to concede the finals without playing. It would have meant the loss of a fortune for promoters and media so he was pressured until he agreed to play under heavy painkiller sedation. John Newcombe (now part of the TV commentary team) having examined Borg's hand before the match, told his colleagues on TV (Trabert and Summerall) that he felt the boy was taking a terrible risk playing with a hand with a huge boil that was fiery red and probably septic. Trabert and Summerall pooh-poohed that, Trabert claiming that he had himself once played with a boil. It was, of course, merely a formality for Borg to play the finals in that condition. He kept the rallies going when he could but there was no way that he could have won against any ranked professional. Connors won, and with it went the cry on TV and print in the U.S. — Connors was "No 1". Forgotten was the fact that Borg had beaten Connors 5 out of 6 times in their recent encounters, that at Wimbledon, he had won in straight sets with no real opposition in any set.



Once his hand healed, Borg resumed his winning streak. In Japan (November 5, 1978) he played Teacher in the finals (Teacher had beaten Connors earlier). Borg won but Collins in his commentary was doing his own arithmetic. He said more than once and in more ways than one "Borg is No. 1 or 2 (in the world) depending on how you feel. *He whipped (or ripped) Connors at Wimbledon, but Connors whipped him right back at the U.S. Open*". On each occasion that he used these words (or variations thereof), there was not one word about Borg's boil at the U.S. Open.

Then there was the Grand Prix Masters final in 1978 — staged this time (and each year now because Colgate-Palmolive had bought the right) in New York, indoors, at the Madison Square Gardens. The Masters final is a "round robin" among the top eight players who become eligible. Vilas beat Connors, but during the match perhaps because of the surface (he could not slide) he slipped and hurt his ankle badly. Borg had fever but remained unbeaten too. Because they were far ahead of the rest, the incapacitated Vilas and the flu-ridden Borg decided to give one of their rounds a walk-over and rest. This gave Connors the chance to remain in the running (one loss). Neither Vilas nor Borg recovered enough however, to play well and Connors won, and was hailed as "World's No. 1" (the computer, they said, said so).

In 1979, several foreign players (including Borg) threatened to boycott tennis in the U.S. unless conditions were improved.\* Both Borg and Vilas — though each won enough tournaments to qualify — decided not to compete in the Master's final. U.S. media castigated them. *The New York Times* (January 13, 1979), said Connors was really No 1., that Borg and Vilas had faked their injuries and illness in the previous year's Masters ("suspicious defaults by Bjorn Borg and Guillermo Vilas that tarnished last year's tournament, the Swede with an alleged fever and the Argentine with an alleged ankle ailment"). Why they should have faked, when Borg had beaten Connors just about every time and Vilas himself had beaten Connors in that very tournament before his ankle injury, *The New York Times* did not say.

With Borg and Vilas deciding not to play in the 1979 Masters, Connors should have won. But young John McEnroe emerged, and against Connors took the first set handily, was leading in the second set, when Connors announced that he had a foot injury and withdrew from the match; McEnroe protested at being denied a fully-played match victory, asked the umpire how Connors could suddenly have this boil, but Connors withdrew anyway.

*The New York Times* (the same issue January 13, 1979) however, said it was very sad that Connors was injured, and that he should be allowed to return the next day to continue with more "round robin" matches in the tournament if he wished. The description of Connors' injury took on dramatic forms in the media. The most imaginative piece of copywriting was provided by the NBC TV New York sports commentator who said the umpire *had stopped* the match because Connor "*was haemorrhaging from a boil in his foot*".

To tennis lovers, the declining standards of fairplay at Wimbledon, as Anglo-American hucksters took more control each passing year, was to be the unkindest cut of all. The behind-the-scenes intrigue and arm-twisting (even if half

\* Borg's manager Bergelin said, "Television is telling us what to do. We are being dictated to. We have to play the final when they want it. Sell anything but the heart I say.... Television does not control the other Grand Slam events in England, France and Australia". ("Bergelin has a point" conceded former Australian star John Newcombe, about the only one to report Bergelin's comments in his column in the *New York Post*, August 28, 1979).

what some say it is) was heartbreaking; one of Kipling's worthwhile quotes — "to treat the two imposters [winning and losing] just the same" still graced the pavillion however, almost like a bad joke.\* Significantly, as Mammon closed his grip on the Wimbledon institution, media's adulation (in its own style) increased.

A new twist was added to scavenging for records at Wimbledon in 1978, NBC-TV had bought the honor to cover Wimbledon; it provided the mandatory tourist sights of London, then coming to Big Ben, a girl commentator (added to the entourage that year) read her script: "Big Ben, let's hear it toll. Connors and Borg both wish it tolls for them" (no one will ever know what Hemmingway might have thought of that). Then, in a long segment, NBC-TV provided a tribute to Billie Jean King, accompanied with specially written music and lyrics. King had retired from Wimbledon two years before but she was back at it this year. Why? Because she had learnt that nearly sixty year ago, a Ms Elizabeth Ryan had collected 19 Wimbledon titles. King had 19 (singles, doubles, mixed) over the years. She was now back to play in all three events. Interviewed in England, octagenarian Ms Ryan voiced surprise and pain at the news. There was no publicity ever given to her own achievement, she herself had only just been made aware of it from all the media coverage of King's attempt and the surprised Ryan added — half to herself — "she [King] wants to beat me for some reason". King failed in her attempt because she won no title that year. But she came back the next year and succeeded this time in getting the doubles' title with Navratilova. There was great fanfare on TV and in print at her achievement, but in one way at least, it was pyrrhic. Ms Ryan had died the previous Friday, a day *before* King won the title and broke Ms Ryan's record.

In the Davis Cup December 9, 1978, between Britain and the U.S. we saw an almost unbelievable switch in manners and spirit of Bud Collins and Donald Dell. Collins even said things like "let's not be too chauvinistic" and once even mouthed the words "money isn't important". It could all have been because Britain had, by some miracle, reached the final but was certainly wholly out of its league — the U.S. victory was never in doubt. But it could also have been because the matches were being televised to Britain as well.

But if the British influence conditioned the commentators then, the fact that the Swedes were watching four years later had no impact, perhaps because the U.S.-Sweden encounter was extremely close and Sweden in fact could have won. It happened at the 1982 Davis Cup encounter at Dallas, Texas, which the U.S. eventually won. The U.S. had won two matches, Sweden had won two, when the deciding match, between McEnroe and Wilander went on. There had been "questionable calls" in the other matches, a wild crowd cheering the American side on, and the commentators suitably biased. The McEnroe-Wilander match became an extremely close one, but in the process, McEnroe abandoned all restraints, perhaps banking on the fact that as he was playing for the U.S., he would get with greater leniency; and he was right. He shouted, he threw his racquet, he held up the game, he fought with the linepersons, and the umpire. Sometimes Arthur Ashe, the captain

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\* ABC-TV's weekly top rated international sports show, the sentiment expressed was a little different — each week the theme was "The thrill of victory and the agony of defeat". The segments from international sports — and the commentaries — were of course suitably chosen, when possible, to go with the thought. In another popular TV show, featuring sports "super stars", the theme music was of *Jesus Christ, Super Star!* And in a children's weekly show *Kids Are People Too* the magic refrain was "We are the champions. We are the champions of the world and we'll keep fighting till the end."

joined him. By Davis Cup rules only the team captain can challenge decisions and penalties, including game loss, are clear-cut. Eventually it reached such a stage that even the blatantly partial umpire\* — a British import — had to issue warnings. But it had no effect upon McEnroe. He continued with his excesses. Ashe, the U.S. captain, did nothing to control him. Then as "doubtful" line calls became rather obvious, the Swedish captain protested strongly to the umpire. Nothing. Instead, McEnroe's antics grew worse. Even the TV commentators on occasion now seemed embarrassed and the Dallas crowd, screaming and emotionally charged though it was, sometimes let out a moan. The President of the Swedish Tennis Association now brought out the rules book and walked over to the umpire to protest, not once but several times. The umpire ignored the protests. Towards the end, as the match see-sawed, crucial line calls went against the Swede. Throughout all the pandemonium, the 17 year old Max Wilander remained quiet, the perfect gentleman. The U.S. won. *Or did it?*

Where will the obsession to win, by any means, lead? In tennis, will the few truly sporting players — like Vilas, Borg, Borrowiac, Amritraj (Vijay, not Anand), Wilander, to name just a few — eventually feel called upon, for survival, to join the rest? Already some are changing. It must be remembered that the players, millionaires and celebrities though they may be, now start very early, give up education early, and are very young and impressionable.

John McEnroe, such a brilliant, talented player, is no doubt a "nice person" in private life but he came out with brazen characteristics even while weaning out of amateur status. Tennis clubs and local leagues provide ample evidence of the kind of "winning by any means" attitude that is inculcated. Public relations experts, Big Business and "mind specialists" are now an integral and domineering part of sport. Hypnosis is reportedly used in just about every major Big Business sport, in the "ball games", in Olympic training, and in games like tennis. In a press conference, January 1976, Chris Evert explained that an important cause for her defeat against Navratilova was probably that they had become quite good friends. Evidently this did not allow Ms Evert's cold, calculated "killer instinct" to function on all cylinders. It is this lack of "killer instinct" that had been said to have caused Evonne Goolagong, unquestionably the most graceful and talented player among women in recent years, not to have held the Number 1 spot. In the present milieu, something *other* than sports talent is essential to be the top player.

Perhaps even more than in politics, foreign correspondents are willing to follow the lead of American experts; otherwise foreign media use the wire service reports, without question, no matter how biased — except of course when a player from their own country is involved. Jingoism is very contagious and sport gives it legitimacy. Where will the bastardization of sports eventually lead? Already the idea of being fair to the opponent is looked upon as destructive to the art of winning, and applauding the adversary is considered priggish, almost archaic if not downright stupid. That is our legacy for future generations. The sport itself has become almost incidental to winning.

The best illustration has been provided by recent Czech players. Martina Navratilova was extremely talented as an 18 and 19 year old, but was also very emotional and hurt deeply when "questionable" line calls went against her and

\* The umpire Bob Jenkins, is one of McEnroe's personal choices so he often gets him. On the other hand, Ian Bascy, an Australian umpire was to be suspended for six months because he was reported to have made a strong comment about McEnroe.



nervous when the crowds were fiercely for her opponent. Then she became friends with the Billy Jean King crowd, defected to the U.S.; she had better reception now but not when "native" favorites like Chris Evert were her opponent — and she was still very emotional and sensitive. Then she put herself into the hands of experts — physical and psychological. Automation of the mind and body. And became the undisputed No. 1. But there was soon to be another Czech teenager Hana Mandlikova, who, in fact, is so talented that she could be considered on par with Evonne Goolagong. But she too has no killer instinct, is very sensitive, could go to pieces, especially with "questionable" line calls. Will she eventually find the pain too much and decline away, or will she follow the Navratilova evolution? Ivan Lendl, the amazing Czech male star, was no doubt trying to figure out in 1983, if he should defect. Lendl in 1982 had some amazing winning streaks; he beat McEnroe six out of six times they met; but it was McEnroe who was labelled "World's No. 1" by the ATP ranking system. That was not all; because he was such a threat to American supremacy (after Borg retired, McEnroe and Connors were alternately called "World's No. 1") or perhaps because he was Czech, or even perhaps because he was not as attractive as Borg to become a teenage idol, Lendl received very rough treatment from the American crowds. At the time, between 18 and 19 years old the very sensitive (often watery eyed) Lendl had a frequent question for American reporters: "Why they [the crowds] don't like me?" He was very fair on court, but high strung; eventually he learnt to argue "questionable" line calls with anger in spite of the crowd's boos. Usually he went to pieces after a particularly unhappy situation. The TV commentators have been especially ruthless. Will he defect hoping to be more acceptable and to keep making Big Money? Or will his nerves simply give way? Most of us do not recognize the extreme pressure under which top world class players have to be — even without the torments of the current devastation of sportsmanship. Because most top players have the capacity to beat one another, intense concentration and mental peace is necessary; losing even one point unfairly at a crucial stage can destroy the spirit and the game.

The public however was never allowed to ponder on this. In the intensely commercial atmosphere, TV and print commentators kept the public constantly aware that Big Money was involved, that the players were "performing" for the benefit of the public, whose patronage was *raison d'être*; the public was the customer to be kept happy, not to be criticized. And what could be more pleasing than rooting for your side?

That belief was even more directly stated by a star-promoter of another sport, gaining "explosion" status in the U.S. Soccer was suddenly "in", and with the growing market, rules were being changed to suit Big Business and televising needs. Indoor soccer was being developed with astroturf as the surface and the layout similar to ice-hockey rinks. "Sports has no social significance" said Ship Messing, the New York Arrow star (of the new Soccer League), promoting the new soccer at a WNET-TV interview November 17, 1978; "if the fans like it, it is good" he said with great authority.

Greed, of course, is not a monopoly of Big Business in any one land. The success of Big Business in one area and in one part of the world is contagious. Methods are quickly aped. An Australian commercial TV magnet, Kerry Packer, soon commenced a World Series circus in cricket, a sport that covers all Commonwealth countries. He lured away top players from the official representation of their own country in traditional test series. His teams perform for crowds and apparently draw the rowdiest

too. In the West Indies in early 1979 crowds rioted and vandalism put an end to one of the "World Series" cricket matches. It was followed by one of the cricketers Australian Ian Chappell, reportedly punching a local official in the stomach. The Cricket Boards in most countries have furiously opposed this "circus" commercialism. But how long they can hold off its tentacles — or that of the next commercial gimmick — only time will tell. In the meanwhile, even in Test cricket, all gentlemanly behavior of the past has become just that: of the past.

Today's popular attitude is perhaps best summed up by the statement on TV during ABC — TV's *Wide World Of Sport* coverage of the 1978 Daytona 500 Motor Race, where one of the leading contestants, justified cheating in an interview "Cheating is a way of life" he said. "To the laymen", he added "it might be cheating but to the competitors it is merely meant to find ways to get around the rules".

Winning is part of the enjoyment of sport. But winning by any means is something else. It is that orientation that can allow rationale to school children to cheat in exams (or "get around the rules"). It can be something one justifies because "everybody does it", as the star adult character (the heroine) in one of CBS's long running series *Rhoda* said in one 1978 episode when she herself cheated.

The thirst to be "No. 1" can cause nations to spend many billions of dollars each year in space exploration, when the cost of the productive and profitable aspects of these undertakings (and not all of it is now for peaceful objectives) could be halved, made even less if all the knowledge gathered was pooled, for the human race.

And it is the same obsession that provides the rationale to the public as each competing nation piles up ridiculous levels of nuclear arsenals in the insane arms race, because "we will never be No. 2".

All the political skulduggery of Richard Nixon and his aides centered around it. "Winning in politics is not everything. It is the only thing" said the posters put up by the Nixon aides in the White House.

It begins early. Since 1974, occasional concerns about cheating and excessive abuse of children in participatory sports disclosed that in organized sports for children like Little League, baseball teams, coaches were apt to ridicule, abuse even hit children who did not perform according to expectations. At another traditional annual event, the Soap Box Derby for children it was found in 1972 that many children cheated with the help of parents. In a *Time* magazine report in 1976, Yale University Dean Eva Balogh described cheating at Universities' class examinations as "rampant"; John Hopkins University Dean Sigmund Suskind said, "Cheating is not endemic, it's epidemic. My colleagues all over agree". At Lehigh University, a telephone survey found 47% of students *admitted* to cheating. The University of Southern California's "Daily Trojan" found 40% of students *admitted* to cheating. And at West Point, the military academy whose image has been boosted as the U.S.'s Sandhurst, disclosure upon disclosure of cheating brought investigations in 1975. Arthur Lincoln, a lawyer upon disclosure of cheating brought investigations in 1975. Arthur Lincoln, a lawyer defending one of the accused boys, and a West Point graduate himself, claimed that 90-95% of cases were never reported. And Cadet Timothy Ringold, accused, exclaimed "Roughly one third of my junior class cheated and the other two-thirds tolerated it"; what he was really saying was "Doesn't everybody?"

Throughout human history, among the enduring values of good breeding — which of course has nothing to do with lineage — have been the moral strength of fairness overcoming the more base desires of self-indulgence. This has been unchallenged in all civilizations. America's founding values were very much planted in such values.



Yet now, in the post-Watergate era, even as media claimed that the nation was moving towards "conservative" values, Big Business and its politicians claiming always to be "conservative", were corroding those very precious real conservative, enduring values, perhaps beyond redemption even by future generations. And we could have done something about it, if we had been willing to face some unpleasant truths.

After all, what was more important after Watergate than to ensure that youngsters did not develop in the belief that "Winning at politics is not everything... it is the only thing"?

(vi)

There was another "explosion" that media was heralding immediately following the Watergate scandals. It was called "the cultural explosion". Culture has, through human history, been an important measure of the national fiber. And we must take at least a brief look at the phenomenon in America, as it should have been examined in the post Watergate era. America had never been a country steeped in culture or in the arts. There had been talents and men and women learned in the arts, even within commercial media. Cultural progress had been one of the important dreams among the early Americans.\*

Media talked incessantly of "Western civilization" and "Western culture" for obvious commercially beneficial objectives. But the nation had made very little progress in the direction of cultural growth as artists and intellectuals from Thoreau to Sinclair Lewis had often deplored. John Kennedy set a new trend in including artists and intellectuals in his inaugural ceremonies and among his associates — a fact that caused art lovers to rejoice but many others to look upon him with deep suspicion.

The youth movement of the 1960s had resulted for the first time in a deep national awareness among many of American young for a genuine understanding of the arts. The period marked closer ties with European youth for the American young, in ways markedly different from the past. Even though cultural development was in many ways on the decline in some of Europe's new mass societies, there still was a considerable difference, and the American young saw it.

But as the relatively few students of the arts — literature, painting, sculpture, the performing arts — grew, commercial media jumped on the bandwagon. And soon it was a national fad. The yearning for "Op-Con" elitism was strong and that gave it the momentum. Cliches and simplifications took over. Mass movements of youth and the middle-aged towards the arts grew. Crash course in classical music and in wines spread like wildfire. To be merchandized on massive commercial scale, simplified and unstructured forms were necessary. A "renaissance" had been declared (quite inappropriately of course since there had never been any real art movement in the country before) and this in the era of freedoms culminated in the wild popularity of "people's art". People's art meant the lowering of art standards to reach the masses; pop art and multi-media experiments were the positive results from the era of barrier-free art, but not always. It became a milieu in which anybody could produce

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\* In 1807, Joel Barlow wrote (in *Olympiad*) "This is the moment to give such a direction to poetry, printing and the other fine arts, that true and useful ideas of glory may be implanted in the minds of men here, to take place of the false destructive ones that have degraded the species in other countries."



whatever they felt and call it art, in music, on canvas, in sculpture, on camera, all justified under the old I-feel-it-here (the heart) variety. The world of art had lived through such trends in the past — but never under the power of such mass media domination. Art now was suddenly anything, any expression. Commercial art, especially TV productions, could now be more easily called art. Did they not have great skill and aesthetic appeal?

Throughout history, art has defied definition. That which cannot be defined therefore, can be most easily confused. "Very few people understand Art nowadays", said Oscar Wilde once, "and those who understand it mistake it for something else".

In past ages, when art was not a mass commodity, only the talented dared to express themselves in art. And only the truly knowledgeable commented on art. Undoubtedly, that could be called "elitism" but only a little thought should show that this requirement was critical: quality can only be maintained when standards are not sacrificed to satisfy *mediocrity* in the mistaken belief that it is "democratic". The critical controversy for many centuries in the West (ignoring for this discussion the older thesis in Asian cultures), evolved around the moral issue of art. Should art teach? And if it does not, is it productive? From Plato (who felt art was twice removed from reality) to those who claimed to uphold "Art for Art's sake" there have been a gamut of knowledgeable and talented artists and critics adding new dimensions to the understanding of the parameters of Art. Aristotle, as a sympathizer, claimed the right to lay rules. Loginus felt Art's purpose was to express a higher meaning — higher than what may be called mass concept of morality, "a deathless longing for all that is great and more *divine* than ourselves". The Church in the Dark Ages was to promptly harness this spirit to perform at command from obligation and often — even in some of Michelangelo's work — from guilt. Even when the Renaissance burst through that harness, its early proponents had to justify it e.g. Philip Sidney's *In Defence of Poesie* and *An Apology For Poetry*. Dryden wanted poetry to instruct and delight. The Italian painters — when not guilt stricken — saw it, as in many ways, as a re-integration of freedom of emotional expression with the intellect in the range of perspective of Uccello to the fiery humanism of El Greco.

At no time, however, did the differing critics question one fundamental requirement; that art was an expression that required special talent, serious work, sincere expression.

Ben Jonson cautioned for "decorum", in an atmosphere of riot — yet felt he could live with excesses, provide it was real Talent that indulged. "That is worse that proceeds out of want [i.e. of talent] than that which riots out of plenty" he said. The Neo-classists under Racine, Boileau, le Bossu were to be more stringent, requiring what Alexander Pope also advocated — "Nature Methodized".

Concurrently, the fervor of Romanticism had prevailed. But if that Romanticism was unrestrained by conviction, it was a wholly different freedom from what we might call freedom today. It was freedom among the responsible, the knowledgeable, not call freedom today. It was freedom among the rebel Lake poets, said, they were required to anarchists. As Wordsworth, one of the rebel Lake poets, said, they were required to possess "more than usual organic sensibility" and to be those who "had also thought long and hard". It was, if properly considered, not at all a contradiction to his own belief in "spontaneous utterance" in much the same sense as Shelley's "unpremeditated art" was not a contradiction but merely a paradoxical extension of Dante's "elaborate and painful toil". In the 20th Century, delinquencies were justified through misinterpretation of the real intent of Benedetto Croce's contention — sometimes misconstrued by the "Art For Art's Sake" extremists; Croce really meant

that the actual expression of art was complete in the *internal* expression by the artist. Whatever the medium therefore, that artistic expression could — if not must — be preceded by blood, sweat and tears, “thought long and deep” or “with elaborate and painful toil” whether the artist was conscious of this or not. Of course philosopher Croce, like Aristotle, was not the artist but the sympathizer, looking in, and omits to consider the pure enjoyment of Art as self-expression. Yet the universality of artistic expression is an important one, as Lessing said: “Art has nothing to do with sequence in time or juxtaposition in space. Painter and poet express not the material detail of the practical world but their own single state of mind”. Consequently, the same idea could have different expression through another medium. The Laocoon Group (now in the Sistine Chapel), is a sculpture of Laocoon and the two children seized by the serpent. Virgil’s Laocoon in poetry cries aloud; playwright Sophocles’ Philoctetes shrieks and moans: but Laocoon in the ancient sculpture is *not* clad in priestly clothes as in Virgil; he is naked. The real agony of the sufferers in the medium of sculpture is *not* the climax of the scream. That scream is almost a sigh here. The real agony is communicated in the visual intensity, expressed through the veins in the neck and the tensions so expressively created by the unknown sculptor in the turn and the limbs of the Group.

If the medium makes such difference, why cannot present day commercial TV and movies be similarly justified? Its proponents have claimed that for several years. Certainly TV and the movies could be art if the fundamental requirements of Art were met — sincere expressions of the Artist. But the objectives have been profits, “giving the public what it wants”. The skills and aesthetics are only incidental to that objective except in the very rare cases.

Is Art so difficult and complex to define and understand because it is, in a sense, (though not quite what Oscar Wilde had in mind) mistaken for something else? In its purest forms, is Art the expression of mortals seeking to express immortal Truth, and sublimating our frustrations in this impossible undertaking with diverse theories? Certainly some of us who may have wrestled with theories for many years may find ourselves wondering if Art, even in its purer forms, may not be simply our thirst for divinity. William Blake felt that Christianity is Art (but *not* the other way around); “He who sees the Infinite in all things sees God” he said, no doubt including in that the explosions he himself created on canvas. On the other hand, Ruskin very simply felt Art was of divine origin, witness to the glory of God, and therefore must, by definition, be within the boundaries of Christianity. If by this he meant the Church, not Christ, Keats was not with him when he said, “Beauty is truth, truth beauty”, as also Coleridge’s metaphysical belief that “Nature is the art of God”. There were (according to Coleridge) two levels to the imagination: one was the perception of the real world; the second (the rarer talent of the artist) which could dissolve, diffuse, dissipate that consciousness in order to re-create it. In apprehending Nature, then, one apprehends God, Coleridge felt. The final expression, therefore, was never a subjective description but an inspiration outside of oneself. Goethe, the ex-Romantic, felt so too. On the other hand of course, there was Walter Pater to whom the style is the thing, but even here, Pater insisted the artist must have something *worth communicating*.

Form was very soon, to take on a new importance among the post-Impressionists, the Cubists, Futurists, Vorticists, Expressionists but form as a serious, responsible objective of Art. Picasso whose work was to have appeal to Art lovers and pretenders (for different reasons) was eventually to voice his own exasperation at the commercial



value placed on some of his own work, i.e., the unusual commercial value, which he, as a true Artist, abhorred because he knew some of his work was an experiment in artistic style of expression rather than inspired expression of Art. He shocked the public once by this view, in an interview with *Life* magazine.

It may be — as is claimed — that the parameters of Art have changed in democratic societies. Certainly mass entertainment in the form of Hollywood films, commercial radio, commercial "best seller" books and commercial TV have no precedent in human history. If the people like it, it is Art, argue the mass merchandisers. Who are the select self-styled critics to claim they know more than anyone else? Or to put it another way, who do you think you are anyway? People have rights in democracies, see?

Such arguments are usually considered On The Side of the Angels. Except that those who squelch, even frighten others with such arguments are in the business of making money from such "art", from insidious propaganda clothed in entertainment; cannot such propaganda be the "message" in Art? No it cannot, because such propaganda is the primary motive, the moving spirit, for the work; and by definition, such propaganda dismisses or distorts the truth.

There is something extremely dangerous in the virtuous argument of "people tastes", and recent history has shown how dangerous it is. What such arguments in essence claim, is that in a Democracy, standards *must* be low, very low. It implies that people, ordinary masses of people, do not have, and *are incapable* of having better tastes — hardly a vindication for Democracy. But the argument works to serve the purpose — and crushes opposition effectively. Not that it even needs to bother. In the Big Business of the new art forms, the wealth of the successful owners of the new art forms and their stable is argument enough. The mass public resists "high brow", Big Business finds 'low brow' easier to churn out in large quantities, encourage the public resistance to quality and happily pocket the millions that pour in.

Attempts have been made of course by the true talents to uplift their art forms — even in the early days of the motion picture industry but it has not worked. Movies, Radio, TV all went commercial from the start with selective propaganda blended in. Appeal had to be to wide audiences, usually based upon the lowest common denominator. Even when talent was used it had to conform to these requirements — or die.

While the U.S. made very powerful contributions, even innovations in the art form of the theater through the musical comedy, it was essentially Jazz that the U.S. can rightfully claim to be its primary contribution. But if Jazz did flourish in the 1920s, and the 1930s, it was not the pure art form that won general recognition and fame, but its adaptation. It was not Ornett Coleman and King Oliver and Fletcher Henderson who became national heroes; it was *not* Benny Goodman, Lionel Hampton, Teddy Wilson, and Gene Krupa in their brilliant quarter and trios or Artie Shaw in his, that shook the nation, but the Big Band Sound of Goodman, Dorsey, Shaw, Miller, that America could dance to or provide easy phrases to listen to. In retrospect of course, that at least was acceptable, because it was still good, interpretive music by real talents who respected, often understood the serious classics; more creative levels were soon reached with the "bop" and progressive sounds of Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Lester Young and the like; a new sophistication arrived with the tempo breakthrough of Dave Brubeck's *Take Five*. But Jazz was now decidedly free form comparable to poetry's vers libre with fierce needs for *self-discipline*, knowledge but more than anything else — true talent. Dante's "elaborate and painful toil" applied as



much as Wordsworth's "spontaneous utterance". The brilliance of John Coltrane, that great soul in agony, could sometimes speak through deliberate squeaks, but when those freedoms were used by the limited talents and no-talents, as they were in Jazz as well as abstract art, it was not art, but simply an *excuse for delinquency*, without discipline.

With commercial Television blanketing the nation, only a few Jazz musicians could survive, not because of TV but *inspite* of it. In Europe, Japan and elsewhere, Jazz remained in demand but not in America. Tinsel-town hype took over as a substitute for talent and often even without the pretence of art. Elvis Presley had talent as did several of his contemporaries in the new Rock'n Roll era. But talent was no longer essential if your Marketing Mix was correct in other ways. It might even become an *impediment* to remolding the talent to suit that Marketing Mix. Presley appealed to merchandisers and promoters because of something *other* than talent: gimmickry. The Beatles had their gimmick too and they certainly set new standards with their remarkable talents, but theirs was a unique phenomenon — not since Shaw and Ibsen had artists like John Lennon propagated a philosophy with such fervor and, considering the power of present-day media, far more powerfully than had ever been done.

Art and a message certainly were prominently interwoven in the 1960s movements; and it was a deeply felt message, not a distortive, calculated one; sometimes the talent was limited, often the message was used by no-talent, then also by no-convictions opportunists (calculated, not felt). Something else became a powerful force in that exposition, even more so than in the 1950s pop era. Gyration started with Presley, sexual overtones and electronic technology combined to create "vibes". By the 1960s, painted faces and bodies, wild clothes, rehearsed behavior, *studied* wildness all combined to make the "atmosphere" with the deafening and repetitive sounds and strummings of poor talents. Some called them orgies, others called them religious experiences. In the extreme cases, such as the Woodstock Festival, the performers on the stage had little to do with the emotions of the massive crowds. In similar "happenings" before and since, the audience — in the real sense — was not faceless. *The performers were*. This was to become even more evident with the next craze — disco sound. The sound and the hype were powerful — but the craze was greatly helped because the opportunity provided the audience to participate, to be part of the "art". Was it participatory art as in experimental theater? Was it Art as understood through the centuries or merely a sociological phenomenon of what one might call the groin culture, resulting from a yearning for recognition in a bored and faceless society? Perhaps we are too close to it all in time to really know.

With the massive popularity of the "Nashville sound" we can be more certain. An outgrowth of folk music, "country music" in its usual form would have been merely nostalgia, lacking quality music and lyrics, but clever and successful promoters had made it into a cult, with intense emotional appeals to what were considered "grassroots" values but have become in fact political overtones. It had become quickly recognized as a powerful weapon for what was now known as "cowboy politics" (in the early post-Watergate period), not grassroots morality. The image that strategists and promoters successfully garbed "country" music with was that of (1) white "middle class" America; (2) Down-to-earth values, so sex could be freely used as long as it was under the general umbrella of flag-waving and talk of Christian faith; (3) intense nationalism; (4) the 1950s values, deeply intertwined with Op-Con politics; (5) Deep suspicion of intellectualism.

Folk music of the past had — as it does everywhere — an emotional appeal, the charm of heritage, the nostalgic appeal as the unspoilt natural extension of the past. But now, under Big Business, "country" music had developed into something of a political-social statement. Country music did not require a good ear for music and its performers and writers clearly aimed to *avoid* the dizzy heights of creativity, because that could easily spell failure in appeal to the majority of the audiences. In this peculiar milieu, jazz was not only rejected for unidentified racial reasons, but with a peculiar twist for which its image-makers cannot but be admired: it was "elite" to *not* care for music that required a good ear and some knowledge of music. It was from this emotional nucleus that the hard core supporters of "conservative" Southern and Western politicians were emerging. Their historical suspicion and rejection of "intellectuals" went well with such belief. Backed with Big Money and therefore with the best in image-making strategists, aided generously by commercial TV programming this was now to be the core of the new "Conservative" wave sweeping the country. Phrases and ideology, whether in music or politics, that could not be understood without some thought and knowledge, were to be suspect and rejected. Come down to base emotionalism, the level of The Lowest Common Denominator, it said. That is grass roots. And to Op-Con politicians and commercial media, nothing could have been more pleasing.

Of course some country musicians had talent, some were full of it. As in pop, "folk music" popularity drew the highly talented too; it had to. Just as pop music had in addition to the Beatles and other innovators, the superb talents of Barbara Streisand, Marvin Hamlisch, Paul Williams, Simon and Garfunkel among many others, the country sound had been distilled into great performances by such as Judy Collins, Joan Baez, young Janis Ian, Kenny Rogers. Talent can surmount great odds at times. The musical genius of Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughn had conquered the tremendous odds to stay at least marginally popular through the various fads. The real tragedy lay not in the fact that at least top talent could make and stay at the top — with or without aid and artifice — but that so many more never could make it because they did not have the "luck" or the right gimmickry for what Big Business felt was essential to be acceptable. On the other hand, many hundreds of others, with the right "image" promotion and gimmickry were now the right "package" for Big Business acceptance, an angle, a "unique" gimmick. Some claimed to be "experimenting". When a Yehudi Menuhin, an Ahmed Jamal, a Dave Brubeck or a John Lennon take off to experiment with innovations, they do in fact deserve the right to experiment — their talent is proven. "Others abide our question, thou art free" as Ben Jonson once said of Shakespeare. But when pimply youth and middle aged "country boy" performers string impossible noises from the vocal cords and the guitar, claim through outrageous garb or other gimmickry that they are "experimenting" and Big Business can make them financial successes through shock value, or when an overabundant blonde with many wigs becomes a household word and super star because of incessant TV promotions of her measurements (despite mediocrity of both face and music talent), all claims to what is Art by the values of history must necessarily be buried. And while with, in some ways, understandable extremism, during the years of protest, Chuck Berry and his followers asked Beethoven to "roll over", without perhaps even knowing who he was, much less his music, Beethoven and all other artists must do just that today. Not because of the stones hurled emotionally at the Establishment during the 1960s turbulence. But in the grim fact that Big Business could so successfully use the protest era as an excuse to



institutionalize Mediocrity, using the emotional trends of the protest era, to subvert and destroy historical norms of art and then claim, in the same breath, to be "conservative" in outlook.

Mediocrity in product does provides Big Business with great sales volume, whether it is in food products, cosmetics, underarm deodorants, music or any form of art; acceptance of low standards permits many more brands or performers to be launched with enough "uniqueness" in packaging and image, with advertising and PR budgets beyond the means of the rest. The system trounces competition from smaller fry, and reduces the need for creating the "better mousetrap" or artistic performance. The quality of art, the responsibility to uphold standards, preserve the treasured values of the past ages? For the "New Conservatives", profits and the right to make and keep more profits are what it is all about.

In any age, reverence for mediocrity creates its vicious cycle. When that accelerating trend to mediocrity is unrecognized, and fused within a "cultural explosion" (even if there is a genuine awakening of interest in culture among a few), it can spell disaster for both Art and individualism, enhancing the appeal of unabashed imitators, with unabashed plastic appeal. "Beatlemania" was soon to be one of the most profitable of Broadway performances. Heavily advertised on TV it claimed to be and was, nothing more than a group of four performers selected carefully to be Beatle lookalikes, and rehearsed to imitate the Beatles in Beatle songs. And on Elvis Presley's death, an explosion of Elvis imitators burst upon the national scene — on TV and off — and many fortunes were made. Elvis memorabilia in all conceivable forms garnered \$25,000,000 in one year for promoters and beneficiaries. Another fortune was being made by several of Elvis's family and close friends. And it was all happening while media said there was a "cultural explosion" and was revamping itself to a more sophisticated, arty image.

In many ways, the average American, especially in the major cities, was changing fast, was becoming more sophisticated, with a single-mindedness that was typically American. Americans were taking media-announced "cultural explosion" seriously, becoming less provincial; youth had demanded European refinement and tastes and in many ways it came. Wine was "in"; crash courses in wine appreciation were an epidemic around the nation and the nation of beer and bourbon drinkers were soon wine and scotch aficionados; foreign cars were in; the Rolls and Mercedes became the status symbols now, not the Cadillac. Continental cuisine was in; European entrepreneurs saw what was happening and leaped across the Atlantic and set themselves up in New York, Texas, Los Angeles; haute couture took on a new meaning; Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills became in fact the most expensive fashion capital of the Jet Set; for the rest, suddenly it was very "in" to spend lavishly on designer jeans, on gourmet food, on good wine, on very expensive chocolates (even the word "chocolate" was now used, not candy); the American language was changing. The pronunciations and the slang were being uplifted.

We shall examine later some details of how TV programming led the way. Just about all of its reflection of contemporary America was from now on, of an elitist lifestyle; even middle income families had sophisticated tastes. And the very rich and sophisticated — the Best People in fact — were the highly opulent business barons, merchant princes in family sagas of an aristocratic bearing who lived in mansions of great taste. Comedies, cops-and-robbers, even Westerns reflected a new heritage. Best seller novels almost invariably dealt with super-rich Business barons and baronesses.

Yet the soap operas were in, with a vengeance. Soap opera lovers, said TV



commentators, were coming out of the closets, no longer ashamed. The "soaps" were uplifted too — to reflect the new sophisticated lifestyle. Across America, over 25 million now watched soap operas — among the most ardent were the teenagers and college students. The basic nature of the "soaps" did not change, of course, just the packaging.

With all the collective rationales, a new, confident form of elitism was emerging. In the past, the weaker aspects of American social norms were known to be weak. Print media was also changing, even the more responsible newspapers. They became more stylized, with new graphics, more reflective of the New Sophistication. But as the reading (or claimed reading) of *The New York Sunday Times* and the *Times Book Review* became even more of a status symbol, even responsible newspapers gave greater emphasis to gossip, to advice on How the Best People Lived, and increasingly to a brazen form of snobbery.

Concurrently, gossip and sensationalism became, if anything, even more popular. The TV and print empires brought out their own gossip magazines. The tabloid *New York Daily News* continued to enjoy the highest circulation of any U.S. newspaper. The *New York Post* almost went under until it changed — with ownership — into a tabloid of sensationalism. The highest circulation of any periodical in the U.S. was *TV Guide*; then it was overtaken by *The Enquirer* the new frankly scurrilous weekly, closely followed by similar tabloids such as *The Star* and *Midnight Sun*.

When the New York newspapers went on an extended strike in 1979, the network-owned TV stations of New York extended their news programs by 15 minutes; these extra minutes were used to extend their normal gossip and "society" news, and to feature slide presentations of the newspapers' Sunday comic strip supplements.

TV programming and TV/Print commentators led the way and the American public followed; casual sex was in, no longer just the prerogative of youth rebels. Good grooming was in; men wore longer, coiffured hair styles; mustaches and beards were also in but coiffured. The positive aspect of the women's liberation movement, of breaking the imposed role-playing by men and women, was not gaining. Back in 1967, when this was the core of the movement, even women had been unwilling to be part of it; for instance, at a meeting that year off Sixth Avenue in New York there were perhaps only thirty women and just two men; over the following few years, the movement had grown a little but not much, though women leaders tried very hard. Media had then reflected a token acceptance (women were by far the main shoppers of advertised products) but only with a partially hidden smirk; after all, TV had been the chief architect of the stereotyped role model for men and women for so many years — from the selling of women's bodies in programs and advertising to the "macho" image of the male bread winner.

But soon the women's movement became a mass movement; just about all women became "aware", and part of the women's movement. The difference was apparent; now the women leaders had zeroed in on "equal pay for equal jobs"; money was very much in, as always, and women were now bursting forth to seek "fulfilment" at jobs; and with that growing popularity, TV networks made the decision and jumped aboard. TV was now a supporter of the movement and curiously the strong and critical argument of women leaders in the past that men had been computerized, enslaved by their corporations and needed to be released from their rigid "macho" roles, was now easing off. Instead, women were seeking those very jobs for

"fulfilment". Promptly, TV programs and all advertising immediately began to show the glamor of women in executive roles: The New Woman. Big Business no doubt breathed a sigh of relief. Now instead of women critical of the corporate man, women were striving for the job themselves — or any job. Young women in droves joined not the Department of Humanities at the universities, but the School of Business. Did women realize that they were selling out to the lure of the Dollar, that they were in fact entering *a new era of slavery* by imbibing the values of men, male behavior patterns instead of freeing the men from it? If they did they did not show it. Understandably, most women, after so many years of suppression, were perhaps too elated to care. Some claimed that they were plunging in to change things from within — the same rationale as youth gave when it ended its values revolt. In the meanwhile, the Humanities Departments at universities were becoming virtually extinct.

In many ways there was a healthier attitude in men-women relationship; some barriers did fall, some role-playing did end. Yet so fast was the change under TV stewardship, that one could not help but wonder at the dangers of the somersault of the phenomenon of peer group pressure, because it was "in", in this sophisticated age. Did the deep-seated TV trained, stereotyped American Man really change *within* as fast as he claimed to do? Men go to War, said the old saw, because women were watching. Did so many men (though by no means all) change outwardly to the new acceptance for a similar reason? Only time, and later statistics on impotency, will probably tell.

There were some curios, contradictory and saddening results from the new cultural changes. There were many Americans who had genuinely taken to the arts and culture much before the "explosion". But the general trend of the "explosion" and the millions of its adherents was that, like any fad that swept the nation through media hype, the outward manifestations of belonging were more important than anything else. Among those who could afford it, (and many, who could not) it became obligatory to be "in", on the latest in fashions, in grooming, the stock phrases to denote knowledge of art, the disco scene, the obligatory visits to museums, to the theatre, to music recitals, to the ballet.

Media said it was all the trend, so millions more did it. But it all required more money; it was all hard, specially with the recession. Then as property prices doubled and trebled, millions more felt more affluent, at least in the paper price of the redeemable value of their homes. With husband and wife at work, household income grew, even if the entrepreneurs managed to get most of it through the inflationary spiral. It was the "me-first" era; hedonism had been carefully injected into the ashes of the New Morality making the body more attractive, making pleasures last longer through life. Transcendental Meditation, hatha yoga, marathon encounter groups, of a few years ago still had their adherents, but the greater influence was towards physical care. For the mind, "est" offered a more pragmatic approach than meditation and idealism; its popularity zoomed as did that of a new wave of "How to" books. Health clubs mushroomed as did new exercise routines. If the skew of the mass condition had been deliberately planned, it could not have been bettered for the propagation of Op-Con values. There was the terror of lost jobs, recession, the nightmares of the soup lines of yesteryear, revived by media; as a result there was fear to make more waves, fear of upsetting the institutions, the desire to be part of the new era of stylized living, conspicuous spending, hedonism, the "me-first" era, all pointing to a new thirst for the Almighty Dollar, a new rationale for materialism. In this new passion for materialism, the remnants of the moral indignation of Watergate would soon be washed away.

Culture has, through human history, been the condition for refinement of the individual from *within*; but now in its promoted form, it was the *outward* manifestations that gave the most pleasure. As in the 1950's, art and antiques registered new record prices — the old masters now selling for several millions and new billionaires were soon not merely buying a painting by its dimensions, to fit an empty wall space, but some even plastered their bathrooms with the new blue-chips investments.

Deep within, the American public was confused. The change to the New Sophistication had come too fast; deep within, there were the other fears and insecurities — economic, the new dramatic social changes in men-women relationships, the "generation gap"; perhaps many also realized that art and culture are, historically, a process of refinement awakening of the inner thirst for the sublime, the Ultimate Truth, the ethereal. In this "cultural explosion" and "new conservative" trend, they saw those very values sabotaged, and it confused them even more. Yet there was this national phenomenon from the ongoing media hype; it appealed to the material, the hedonistic side. Peer group pressure was very strong. But confusing.

As in the 1950's, the American public was now most dependent on being led: and commercial media was more than willing to lead.

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When Barbara Walters garnered through the NBC-ABC battle for her services the record contract of \$1,000,000 a year from ABC, *Time* magazine interviewed BBC's newcaster Angela Rippon ("Britain's Barbara Walters", the magazine called her) to ask her how she felt about her own salary of "less than \$14,000"; "I'm delighted for Barbara Walters" Ms. Rippon told *Time* "but things are on a little different scale here. We're not in the personality industry. We are journalists, not performers" (*Time*, May 31, 1976).

*Time* then went on to tell its readers how different things were in Britain. It compared "starchy BBC" with Britain's ITV, the commercial network, and said that while BBC claimed to have the larger share of audience, "audience measurement is unrefined in Britain" and that "ITV news has long been considered by critics to be livelier and more imaginative than the more starchy BBC".

The *Time* magazine empire now included commercial TV stations and a cable TV network.

In fact, things had been different and healthier on British TV. The competitive strength of non-commercial BBC and commercial ITV had maintained a good balance. As the European Urge took on a new meaning in America after the youth rebellion, American TV entrepreneurs had sought for inspiration in Britain too; they bought rights to British series or adapted them for American conditions. There were some that did not work, but others became big hits, such as *All In The Family* (from *Till Death Do Us Part*) and *Sanford & Son* (from *Steptoe & Son*). America's floundering non-commercial PBS (soon to become essentially commercial) had most of its successes airing BBC and ITV productions.

But things were already changing on Britain's TV and they would change much faster with the Thatcher government. The Nixon-Kissinger foreign policy involved a concentrated effort to form a strong Western Alliance, along with even greater Anglo-



American business involvement. Image Making was critical for this purpose. One of the consequences of this concerted campaign was a perceptible Americanization of British TV, faster than it might otherwise have been. Britain probably benefited from America's superior technology, but the nature of programming and news generation became steadily more slanted; propaganda seeped in with the subtleties that were, by now, traditional on American TV; after the Thatcher government would come into power, British TV, especially ITV, would become virtually a carbon copy of the American commercial networks; most of entertainment programming was American; game shows were adaptations from American game shows; news broadcast formats were a duplicate of the U.S. and even BBC was not too far away. In different issues in the news, the point of view hardly ever varied any more; gradually, there was, if anything, more reverence for American institutions and political views on British TV than on American TV itself.

There would continue to be differences, in quality, of some entertainment programs and news broadcasts. Occasionally, British news could even reflect an individual stance at odds with its American counterparts; occasionally, there could be the refreshing statement to show that Britain's historic commitment to freedom of speech was not entirely dead on TV, as when 30 minutes were provided to the Socialist spokeswoman in 1981 (in the U.S. one minute would be provided and only for "responsible opposing view"), in which she denounced at length the role of British TV as the servant of the Thatcher government and Big Business.

*Time* magazine's comment that audience measurement is an "unrefined science in Britain", may well be true and no doubt the British were trying to imitate the U.S. on this, too. By now, in the U.S., many different techniques were used not only to measure audience size and composition every fifteen minutes of each news and entertainment program, but personality profiles of news "performers" were constantly studied.

There was enormous competition in the U. S. in the business of TV news. All the TV networks and the 200 odd commercial stations either subscribed to or had access to the wire services, from which most of the day's news was selected, paraphrased by scribes and read on-air. Each network had its Washington and international staff; and each local TV station of course mirrored network news but also attempted to have a "scoop" or a "special report", but mainly the critical factor was the personality of the news readers ("newscasters") the rapport between them and the audience, the setting. Among other types of studies, focus groups were frequently conducted to zero in on public reactions; heavy advertising of the news program was conducted throughout the day. Typically, a commercial would be supposed to reflect the positive "extemporaneous" comments of the men and women off the street about the news program's newscasters: a man would be "accosted" and asked and he would say, "Well, I watch WXYZ because John is an okay guy. He tells it like it is"; a girl/woman (sparkling eyes): "Oh I just love that cute face of Bill, wow, like he's got such a sexy honest voice and he knows his job"; a blue collar: "I like WXYZ News cause I like a bit of humor after a hard day, know what I mean? We are the greatest country in the world, I hate all them bleeding hearts and all that sad news that's why I watch WXYZ. I like a bit of fun, know what I mean?"; the intellectual: "I'm very discriminating about news and I like WXYZ because they provide news objectively, they do not slant news, I think Jane is a very good journalist, the best there is. And they give me all the news I need in a few minutes". And, for local news in particular, the sports fan: "Hey WXYZ is alright, man. Ron's where its at. Gives all the scores

and tells how it happened". With that the commercial would have generally covered all the target segments.

Feedback from the Spiro Agnew "Silent Majority" campaign had disclosed that, many in the public were upset because too much of the news broadcasts dealt with sad news; they felt depressed watching the news. As a result one ABC TV network station started the trend which others soon followed. In the new format, not only was good news accentuated but the news team became hearty friends in front of the camera each day. They laughed, joked, slapped each other on the back. The rollicking stage soon passed, because of adverse criticism. But the jocular hail-fellow-well-met camaraderie continued and was picked up by competitors. Research showed audiences liked the newsteam to be buddies and part of their own family. But if audiences did not like bad news (i.e. news that depressed them), they continued to be fascinated with catastrophes, accidents, disasters; they were given large doses of it. One veteran Metromedia (later NBC) reporter set a new high in investigative journalism in 1972, when he dashed to the scene of the death of a teenager in New York. Thrusting his mike ahead of his competition at the mother, sobbing hysterically next to the corpse of her son in the street, the reporter asked, "How do you feel right now about Johnny's death?" Other reporters followed similar routines.

In the post-Watergate era, all of American journalism had gained from the glamorized image of the Watergate investigative reporting. It was exactly when it was most important to examine what should have been examined a long time before: Media's record in other areas, on other issues, its skewed political and commercial interests, its monopolistic empires, its show biz celebrities, its tendencies to create events and trends, not merely report them.

TV news had moved quickly and dramatically, changing its image. In the 1950s, network TV news existed, covering national and international news, but it was almost a casual affair, aimed merely to provide token news and keep the audience to stay tuned to TV and not go for newspapers if they only wanted headlines. Typically, John Cameron Swezey (famous news "anchorman" at the time) would begin by saying "let's go hopscotching around the world".

By the 1960s, TV networks had realized they could actually hold audiences with their news broadcasts, and replace newspaper readership; network news became 30 minutes\* and its speakers became authoritative personalities. Many dailies around the country were falling victim as TV news soon dominated replacing newspaper readership; they were now closing down, or selling out to the giant newspaper empires, who had the money to conduct sophisticated research, and standardize reporting to the telegraphic TV style, use syndicated columnists and foreign correspondents, use image experts for format, the sales promotion gimmicks to entice readership; if one newspaper sold to a newspaper empire, a competitor in the area could seldom survive on its own, and would have to sell, too, if it could, to another giant.

Some of the giant newspaper empires had become like retail conglomerates, with their chain-stores of newspapers strewn around the nation. By now the Newhouse empire included 79 newspapers; between them, the Hearst, Maddock, Chandler, Pan-Ax and Ganett owned the majority of America's dailies. In addition, they owned

\* According to Gary Paul Gates veteran news writer for CBS News in his book *Air Time* the anchorman received payment based upon the amount of advertising dollars. "Reporters [became] accomplices in the policy of airing commercials on news broadcasts" he writes.

TV stations, magazines, radio stations and other businesses, including publishing. *The New York Times* in addition to magazines and TV, also owned an international news service, book publishing and shared ownership of the European *Herald Tribune* with *The Washington Post*. The latter owned other newspapers, TV and radio stations, and *Newsweek* magazine. The financial interests of media empires, of course, extended to many other businesses, industries, and into foreign countries\*.

The incestuous relations between the entertainment giants, Gulf & Western, Transamerica, RCA, CBS, ABC, Universal, MCA, Warner Communications and AT&T were mindboggling, and virtually impossible to decipher. The Ralph Nader group had tried to trace Big Business interlinks and kept trying. Even concerned Congressional leaders tried to determine the interlinks between all conglomerates (not just the media business) with limited success. In 1978/9, Senator Metcalf of Montana commissioned a study by Corporate Data Exchange, and found that attempting to trace Big Business interlinks was as difficult as trying to determine Big Business contributions to political candidates.

The Ralph Nader study in 1976 on media had shown that in Washington, the giant networks and newspaper chains along with the wire services dominated news dissemination. Ninety-three percent of media depended almost entirely upon the news versions provided to them. Most of foreign media did not have its own full-time representation in Washington.

By now, the viewpoint of the few media magnates blanketed the earth. In *Esquire* magazine, two reports, *TV Imperatives* (Richard Reeves) and *The Media are American* (Jeremy Turnstall, University of London) provided some data: 35 countries imported more than 30% of their TV programs from the U.S. At least 35% of feature films (movies) shown in the world's 54 largest countries were American.

United Press International, TV News, (both American) and Visnews (British) themselves claimed that their news films were used in 95% of the world's TV receivers. Associated Press news reports were used by 4,000 major newspapers, outside the U.S. In ten of the world's most "important" nations, the five largest advertising agencies were American and in 20 other countries the largest ad agency was American owned.

By now, commercial TV's formula was so deeply entrenched and so financially successful, that all other media had gradually come to abide by it.

TV's "telegraphic" style of reporting the news had become the norm for print media too. Studies showed that the average American, who did read newspapers, was now only willing to spend, at most, the amount of time with a newspaper as they did for TV news, i.e., 30 minutes. This time of course included the mandatory reading of sports scores, births, deaths, and advertisements of interest. Serious readers spent about five to seven minutes on the front page, while most merely glanced across the headlines and skimmed an article or two, except when an article was of special interest.

Most of the 65% of American homes that admitted to depending entirely or

\* In an *Advertising Age* article (April 9, 1979) on the Magazine Publishers' Association seminar, held the previous week in New York, it was reported that American media magnates agreed that foreign journals owned by them "must shed a 'Made in U.S.A.' label and veneer". The Hearst media holdings in England were cited as a good example to follow. "The Hearst empire owns 10 magazines in England (and licenses 35 foreign editions through a royalty agreement)... a clean easy non-controversial way to work".



mostly on TV for their news, heard the network TV news (7 p.m. in much of the nation, 6:30 in others) at dinner. It was those choice few phrases, of six or seven subjects selected from the thousands of events around the world, that formed the sum and substance of the average American's daily news diet.

As a necessary part of this new journalism, labelling had become most popular on TV and print too. Labelling was a quick way to identify who you were speaking about. While no doubt a necessity, initially, for the sake of brevity on electronic media, by now it had come to serve a very useful propaganda purpose. Images could be carefully entrenched in the minds of the audiences, so they knew who were the Good Guys and who were the Bad Guys merely from the political appellations.

By now, the lines had been clearly drawn and the public suitably trained, at least that segment of it (a growing number) who had decided to let their favorite newscasters tell them what to think. Of course if you thought for yourself, the whole system broke down. Everyone of course insisted that they did not believe in labels, but thought for themselves.

The world was now divided into "rightists", "leftists" and "moderates". The Rightist was the nice person who believed in Judeo-Christian ethics and traditions, was very patriotic, with a lot of regard for Big Business and the Institutions. A Leftist (once the label reserved for the communist or someone "soft on communism") was now anyone who was not willing to accept things as they were, especially if he/she was against Big Business values. A "Radical" was a leftist gone sour, an active troublemaker.

Now "Op-Con" (this writer's label, not media's) values were to sweep the country, promoted heavily as a new philosophy called "neo-conservatism" in the mid-1970s; it was skillfully garbed as a kind of intellectual movement. It was necessary to do this because the conservative (American style) had become in the 1960s a tardy image of a non-thinking, greedy zealot for Big Business values. In the transitory period, much was made of "neo-conservatism", as expounded by "intellectuals" like Kissinger, William Buckley and George Will. They had great media exposure, and were ably supported by Pat Buchanan (former speech writer for Nixon), William Safire, Edith Ephrom and the like. Some were on TV constantly, others were syndicated columnists; some were on radio like Barry Faber, there were economists like Milton Friedman and all were provided great respect as thinkers. The blue-collar majority of their following was played down; instead "neo-conservatism" was cleverly promoted as an elitist, intellectual movement for the "Haves", and especially those who wished to feel "upper class". It was a more skilled extension of "The Silent Majority" campaign. Slowly, the democratic terminology of lower middle and upper income was being substituted by "class"; "Old Money" was revered; the word "aristocracy" was back, now being referred to any American family with more than two generations of wealth, no matter how acquired.

This conservatism (the "neo" was dropped after the movement blanketed America) was of course blazenly different from the conservative beliefs around the world for centuries. The typical American conservative, who had emerged since the days of the Monopolists, was a Democrat when poor, wanted government to safeguard his rights in society, applauded social programs from which he benefited; if an adult in the Roosevelt years, he was a supporter of the New Deal and all government programs to keep Big Business exploiters in control. Once rich himself, however, he wanted the world to stop. He wanted no more government interference, he wanted "the government to get off the backs of the people" and he wanted it to

"stop wasting money in handouts" to the poor, which made them lazy and a burden on society.

The Conservative, historically (before the advent of the American "Conservative") was someone who believed in age-old, tried and proven values in life, which included not only piety and character but who was revolted at breaches of established codes of conduct for self-serving ends. There was no doubt many among the American Conservatives, who truly believed in such principles too, but the guiding light of American conservatism had been, and was now, that "money is the measure of all things", a belief that the historically Conservative would abhor as very tacky and cheap. American "Conservative" beliefs were in fact diametrically opposed to American founding values, and so in effect, the American "neo-Conservative" was a radical; one could of course be accused of being a spoil sport for suggesting it because one of the great pleasures of being the American Conservative was to be considered "upper class". They might even argue that in their disdain for the poor, they matched the feudal lords of the past. Why then could they too, not be "upper class"? It was this Opportunistic Conservatism that was now not only blanketing America but Europe too. Very Big Money and Big Business, the best skilled professionals money could buy, American media, were all behind the effort; in many ways it was a last ditch effort, but there were, as we have seen, many psychological conditions that favored the movement. It was last ditch, so a great deal of money went behind it, with every conceivable modern marketing and media skill. The lessons learned in the 1960s and in the Watergate exposes were carefully recognized. In Europe, Big Business was already won over, of course, but it was important to have governments of the "new Conservative" style; top U.S. political and image-making experts could soon aid in the election of governments in Europe of the same "new Conservative" flavor. Significantly, some of the British aristocracy and members of older families, were often "radicals" and some others found the new Conservatism objectionable;\* of course others were quite willing to go along with the new conservatism. Margaret Thatcher, the daughter of a small provincial grocer, would — through a barely concealed disdain for the poor and an open reverence for Big Business — soon typify the new Anglo-American Conservative. Soon it would be made to spread, to Italy, Norway, Germany, France, even into that most civilized of all societies, Sweden.

In the current milieu, a "Democrat" was fast becoming a dirty word. A "Democrat" (barring a few exceptions) was, by the media labelling, someone who was not too well-off financially (otherwise he would be a Conservative), or at least somewhat shabby and inefficient. A Republican was at least a corporate executive, suburbanite, of the upper class, or at least the middle-upper class.

A "Liberal" was once the elite in Western society. A "liberal" education itself was once the finest — usually Oxford or Cambridge — because the liberal mind was one which sought knowledge without class preconditioning and prejudices. Now, the "Liberal" was a nuisance who was like the intellectual — impractical, weak, often hypocritical — because no one would actually be for the Have-Nots unless they had an axe to grind.

\* St. John-Stevas, British Tory MP, addressing the Tory Reform Group, Oct.31, 1981 said "Who would have thought that we could live to see the day when economic materialism could deck itself in Tory colors and claim to be not only the authentic voice of Conservatism but its only legitimate manifestation? Yet this is precisely the theme of what has been arrogantly styled 'The New Conservatism'".



A "Moderate" was what every American politician running for office claimed to be; at least occasionally, you spoke from both sides of the mouth, and usually received media's respect; a foreign "Moderate" was one who was extremely enamored with America, often willing to think about America first, then his own country. Jordan's Hossein and the Saudi ruling family were "Moderate" in the best sense of the word. Sadat had been a radical, then quickly became Moderate and ended up a "brilliant statesman". Assad of Syria had been "Moderate" when he agreed to send troops to Lebanon to help the besieged Phalangists and Israelis; but he ended up a "Radical" when he later decided he had been unfairly used, and turned to the Soviets.

Sometimes media had problems with labels, as when the Catholic priests, the Berrigan brothers, espoused the "Radical" cause of the anti-Vietnam War movement. The same problem presented itself when Latin American priests took up the people's "Radical" cause (until the Pope stopped them). These were priests and therefore of the Judeo-Christian tradition, so they should have been "Rightists-turned-Leftists" perhaps. But then there were also the "Rightists" of El Salvador, who were to celebrate Reagan's victory with such fervor that they killed a few Leftists, then bombed the funeral services of those Leftists at the Cathedral. They were firmly of the Judeo-Christian tradition, so perhaps even though they killed, then bombed funeral services at a Cathedral, they were still Rightists — or perhaps "ultra" Rightists.

The Palestinians and the Israelis did not present all these problems, to media or its faithful audiences. The PLO were terrorists who killed for fun and profit, and almost always killed women and children. The Israelis had never been terrorists (even Begin's Irgun of 1947/48 had been "Commandos"). When the Israelis bombed Jordan, Egypt, Syria and now, frequently Lebanon, they conducted "reprisals", "retaliations" or at worst "pre-emptive strikes" and they always bombed PLO terrorist "hideouts"; and they never killed women and children, only the terrorists with deadly accuracy from the air. The exception to the rule was, of course, to be the 1982 massacre of the Palestinians. Yasser Arafat's earlier claims (1975 onwards) that the PLO were willing to recognize Israel, if Israel would recognize the Palestinians, could be brushed aside as "political double-talk". But when he was willing to be part of the Saudi solution in 1982/3 and for that to draw the anger of "Radical" PLO, he became a "Moderate" (Moderate-Terrorist?).

Admittedly labels are convenient in quick identification. But with the growing propaganda value available with such labels, and meeting no public outcry, media now used labels for conditioned reactions from its audience.

Radicalism and terrorism had grown, inside the U.S. directed towards the U.S. government from the youth and black, but American media had a great deal to lose by alienating them even more. So it had jumped on the bandwagon, analysed their grievances, the reasons behind them, and communicated them. A quick solution was needed to preserve, protect and then rechannel the domestic Radicals. There was no such commercial need to understand the foreign activist. There was *every* political reason *not* to check into why he was a Radical, what his grievances were.

But playing the right politics was very profitable. TV's celebrated news performers had achieved dazzling heights by now. As we have seen earlier, Cronkite and Severeid had been proper corporate men, worked their way into the boss' heart and mind and were now millionaire luminaries of media. There were other news veterans on TV news; Howard K. Smith (a Morrow find) had been fired by CBS years ago; "Smith got into trouble because he refused to play the Severeid game — analyse without saying anything" wrote CBS Veteran news writer Bates, quoting a CBS news



producer. Smith then joined ABC and his editorials became suitably "establishment". John Chancellor (NBC) had now replaced Chet Huntley but seemed always insecure. He had started in TV on the *Today* show with a monkey forced upon him as a co-star, just as Cronkite had a lion puppet on the CBS show competing with *Today*. David Brinkley was on and off, so that when on, he tried his best to be liked by the Op-Con elite in his more biting comments; veteran Harry Reasoner, convinced of limitations at CBS, had moved to ABC on the promise of the Top Banana spot on the Evening News, only to find the inexperienced but influential Barbara Walters make the wild leap from the *Today* show into his unhappy lap as co-anchor, and at \$1,000,000 a year, reportedly twice his own salary.

Along with many print journalists, some of these TV news stars had been overseas during World War 2, and glimpsed the glory of colonialism. Now they were the top, the most powerful in the world of media; colonialism was extinct, even neo-colonialism was under fire. It appeared as if men like Severeid felt shortchanged in their hour of greatness. There was deep yearning, as he mouthed his editorials each day, and quoted Kipling\* (especially with regard to the Third World) to somehow convince the younger audiences that he too had once lived in Utopia when the Arabs were just poor nomads and the colonized knew their place. In CBS specials, Cronkite and Severeid often mulled over the glories of yesteryear — reflected glories of course of European empires — but no doubt very impressive to Op-Con viewers, especially the younger ones. These media veterans, like so many others, had hastily donned the "liberal" gown during the youth turbulence, and had now, in the growing neo-conservatism of the nation, just as quickly cast it off, enjoying even greater credibility. The medium required acting skills. Their image experts kept track of their impact upon the public. Cronkite was on view in the studio to the public for only a few minutes each day, but it was the developed mannerism, the expressions, the voice, as important — if not more — than the topics of news he selected and what he said about them. The technical direction, the lighting, the fade-in, fade-out, were also very important for the image — in Severeid's case, the camera angles and lighting were critical. To look at, it was hard for anyone to believe that kindly, trustworthy Walter Cronkite of the TV screen could be highly egotistical, hog the spotlight, or be the type to put down potential competition as Bates claimed in his book "Air Time" or that Cronkite simply called himself "The Name". There were some, of course, highly talented who would never have been acceptable anyway in the top position by the High Command itself; CBS' Roger Mudd was temperamentally too much of an individualist, not capable of playing the game, too apt if he could get away with it to do controversial documentaries against the military; John Hart was brilliant, his editorials (not on the prime spot of course) were memorable but the ideology behind them obviously too humane.

Other second stringers had lesser talent but far more power within the networks and in Washington. The two Kalbs — Marvin and Bernard — were critical front line spokesmen for Israel, whether at CBS or NBC (they each moved intermittently) until Reagan elevated Bernard Kalb to spokesman for the State Department. The Barbara Walters success story was, of course, of even greater import as a guide to the young and

\* Needless to say, not Kipling's "Seven-Fold Curse" on the U.S. and what Kipling saw as the gauche American manners.

the ambitious; young, talented men and women\* in the hundreds of thousands were trying to make it into the glamorous, showbiz bonanza of TV news. Even local newscasters were now paid as much as \$100,000 a year, often rising dramatically with each contract.

Walters had carefully maintained a profile of a simple, homely mother, intelligent, not given the breaks though she could show up Hugh Downs (and later Tom McGee) of the *Today* show; a product of a nightclub owner's family, she had worked her way through a public relations job, to script writer to co-anchor, and carefully avoided making any anti-establishment comments even in the youth revolt days; her careful respect for Nixon, (she called him "sexy" on the air with just the right coyness, when everyone was making fun of or criticizing him); the acceptance she developed into the White House, and — as yet generally unknown — close personal contacts she had with Israeli leadership catapulted her to news stardom. The star then changed her image (were there almost imperceptible changes in features and hair color?) into a New York socialite-divorcee (reportedly, with Roy Cohn, the famous Joe McCarthy aide, a steady escort).

Had the earnest Morrow spirit prevailed in TV news, it could long before this, have easily made American public the most aware, in fact, and the American democracy the healthiest in the world. But then, TV newscasters could, years ago, have spoken the whole truth about important, even critical issues and provided a tremendous service to the nation. It would be expecting too much for them to investigate the facts about Big Business and advertising, but in the international situation, growing more dangerous by the year, TV news could have made an enormous difference by being just truthful. It could have told the public hard facts of what was going on in the Middle East; it could have pointed to the dangers of extreme and unconditional support for Israel, (George Washington had warned against such total commitment to any one country), that the facts (and there were facts galore at least occasionally reported even by European media) showed Israeli leaders were becoming too harsh, too demanding, too trigger-happy; it could have factually told of the suffering and injustices towards the Palestinians, and their rights as humans. In its editorials, it could have warned Jews of the extreme dangers to *themselves* in living too much in the past (in much the same way that blacks were being told not to look on sufferings of their ancestors as justification for their extremism), or for that matter about dangers in electing as leaders those whose psychic had been damaged under Nazi brutality. Such people needed to be nursed, cared for, not made leaders. Above all, media could have shown the difference between Judaism and political Zionism. It could have done this in its assigned role of informing the public, and by doing so, have provided signal service to the nation, and to *American and Israeli Jews*. Because had it done so years ago, and continued to do so, the Palestinians would not have resorted to terrorism, that last, self-destructive alternative to people blinded by rage of suffering and injustices. The American public (including American Jews) if ever aware of the facts, would have forced the hand of the American government to a just role; and the Russian influence on the Middle East would have vanished even before it began. It

\* There were some women in TV news who did not always want to work at the desired image. They had problems with the bosses; WNBC wanted Mary Alice Williams to wear lens to "correct" her light blue eyes; Judy Woodruff and Dorothy Read were made to change hair styles (or else) and Christin Craft was fired because she was "too old" at 38.



would have neutralized one of the most important reasons for the Soviet influence, not only upon the Middle East but upon all of the Third World; the Soviets had come to be looked upon as the just, the defenders of the victimized, a major change since the early post World War 2 era.

The second reason why the communists had made inroads into the Third World was, again, one which American TV had, with the movies and print media, created. This was the deliberately distortive, ridiculing picture of the Third World that had been traditionalized upon the American people. Of course, it made the American people feel good about being Americans, and it helped sell advertised products, by putting people in a satisfied frame of mind to absorb the next commercial. But by now this single-dimensional, often deliberately distortive understanding of the developing countries, from text books and from TV and movies, formed the basis of the attitudes of American children and American adults, and the Third World countries knew this; elected legislators, even a soon-to-be elected President had developed their knowledge of the Third World from movies and TV, and formulated foreign policy, at least subconsciously, demanding subservience based on these illusions.

There was another dangerous result from this distortive conditioning — the Ugly American, demanding from the Third World the same deference once paid by them to the European colonialists. The multinationals made a lot of money but with awakening consciousness, these countries were now increasingly aware of the multinational exploitative practices. The “friends” that multinationals found they were themselves without scruples, greedy, ambitious. There were moreover dozens of examples of a never-ending syndrome — the local despot, or would-be despot, claiming to be anti-communist and pro-USA, heavily promoted by U.S. media as a lover of Democracy, while all opposition to his corruption was labelled communist-inspired; that justified American aid to the greedy despot, often military aid, and often accompanied by direct American involvement in the internal political affairs of the country.

There had been — and no doubt still were — foreign correspondents who actually worked hard to get facts and report them. This happened particularly when the climate suited such reports, such as after the 1975 Senate hearings on CIA and multinational involvements in foreign politics; but all too often, the foreign correspondents from the U.S. joined in with European foreign correspondents at the local luxury hotel, taking turns to obtain whatever information might be available, through “friendly” sources (usually the same type of hangers-on that tourists find cloying at them), or from the despot’s government or his aspiring opposition party; where sources were not available, to substantiate the preconceived story (the storyline having been already determined on policy decision) it was now standard practice to vaguely attribute comments to “an official who did not want to be named”. That traditional *Time* magazine practice was now professional journalism, and the credibility with which such stories were constructed determined the skill of the journalist. The conclusions were pre-determined, only “fillers” were needed; all too often, hard evidence that did not agree with the conclusion was rejected; offers by the unpopular side to provide such evidence were usually ignored.

In some ways, the foreign correspondents’ one-track mind could be excused; they knew what the head office wanted, what the editorial policy was; if they provided the other evidence it would be rejected in editing, and the “wisdom” and “reliability” of the foreign correspondent questioned. It was always important for the reporter to know the mind of the editor and the organization, even if there were unspoken



directions; that separated the successful from the unsuccessful media celebrity. On TV, the films from foreign correspondents were usually assembled at head office in the morning for the evening broadcast, and examined, selected and edited for the evening news; it all had to flow the way a Managing Editor like Walter Cronkite wanted it, and he was Managing Editor because he knew what was expected of him by the top bosses. A "controversial" report might sometimes become a great audience draw; on the other hand, it might mess up the standard political and business policy of the network, its relations with Big Business and government institutions. The same decisions had to be made at the 4 p.m. "news conference" among the editors of a daily.

In many ways, the same forbearance applied to reporters within the country. With the fierce competition that prevailed, the reporter knew that playing the management game was critical for one's career (exactly as a junior executive in any corporation). Reports, foreign or domestic, when refused air-time or print space, raised the red signal to his or her career. Of course, when a controversial story did break and gained public attention, such as Watergate, everyone jumped on the bandwagon. This was true also about any major scandal in a foreign country, even one involving a friendly despot.

The main reason why such "smoking room" political decisions were possible, and by now traditional in the media empires, was that the public was all too willing to go along with them. To the public, favorite media personalities were like movie stars. What Cronkite said was not only the truth, but *all* of the truth. And, when it came to the Third World, there was really not much identification with these backwaters of stark poverty, with their millions of primitive starving villagers and gruesome practices.

There were other grave dangers to U.S. media's ridicule of the Third World and the single-dimensional image it projected. Colonialism had perpetuated that attitude to justify "The White Man's Burden". Like so much imported from Britain through status seeking yearnings, and for the other reasons we have discussed, American TV had found it satisfying and profitable to carry that sneering attitude to unprecedented heights, with its all-consuming, monopolistic power over most of the free world.

The resultant inferiority complex, now deeply ingrained in the peoples of the Third World, were highly destructive to themselves; but it was also highly destructive, in the final analysis, to America and the cause of Democracy. The standard manifestations of that illness was the total rejection of anything Western in some, a fanatical yearning for everything Western in others; bruised egos and jealousies were rampant at all levels; in these newly freed states, mediocrity triumphed in the new democracies, both through identification among the multitudes and because a truly talented leader of one's kind aroused jealousies; freedom fighters claimed the right to high positions for which they were entirely unqualified; the zealot patriot desired all foreign influence removed, and indigenous cultural heritage the only source of inspiration; the influence of American media usually dominated the young and old "westernized", all too often in form that was both pathetic and vacuous. With independence, the old aristocracies were usually a demoded and forgotten breed; usually there was a growing newly rich class, thriving on materialism of the American mold, often even beyond that. Every American fad was quickly adopted, though it usually took a while to become prevalent, often in its overt, adopted form. In business, too, modern marketing methods were often ignored though the *outher husk* of modernity was quickly grasped. In the Third World, all too often, this unpleasant

reality was not always recognized. But there were also more tangible problems that they faced from the former colonialists. There *had* been some benefits from colonialism — another unpopular fact. But the exploitation had far exceeded all that. Economically, the colonized had been stripped; poverty and illiteracy was rampant; one benefit, now of the lower standard of living — the lower cost of living — was the ability to compete in foreign markets. Instead, they had been further stripped by multinationals, and many Western markets were either being closed to their own exports or had quotas or heavy tariffs placed upon them.

The Carrot & Stick policy could work in some cases, short-term, but in the long run it was foolish, simplistic, self-defeating. It was based upon illusions that did not exist any more. These nations, many with very ancient civilizations, would not now accept such an attitude even from the former colonialists; as freed people, they had originally great respect for America, when American policy had in fact sincerely practiced its own founding principles — Franklin Roosevelt, for instance, had used all his influence upon Churchill to relinquish colonial rule. Now American foreign policy dictated that they either accept neo-colonialism and reject friendship with the Soviets and China, or suffer “benign neglect” and more ridicule from America media. “Dollar Diplomacy” had come back in style, in the Nixon-Kissinger foreign policy.

It was an extremely insensitive approach, ignorant of reality and facts. And it helped the communists. The Russians and other communists made their way into the emotionally torn hearts of the peoples in these countries by the opposite policy — their media, if anything, glorifying the Third World countries, respecting their ancient civilizations, and pointing out western economic exploitation. To the rich and poor, anti-West and pro-West, this provided emotional balm and drew the communists in a better light.

It was in all these policies that we were contributing more to the defeat of Democracy and opening avenues for communism, than the communists ever could. It was these policies, and not any “Domino Theory” that encouraged the spread of communism\*. By no means however does this mean that the Third World was a collection of poor nations of pristine purity. That syndrom of illiteracy and poverty had produced, over the years, its own corruption, unreliability, and the tendency to blame all its ills upon past colonialism and current neo-colonialism. And, occasionally, media of these countries would react with anger and sensitivity to the latest example of Western distortion or ridicule against its own country, yet all too often print an obviously distortive or sneering report from a western wire service about another Third World country, without such analysis, sometimes even sharing the sneer. *That argued resentment towards prejudice when it is directed towards oneself, not resentment towards prejudice because it is primitive and obscene.* In some countries, media

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\* Hitler was able to gain popular support in Germany because the suffering Germans, paupers from what they felt was the brutality of the Allies after World War 1, had been willing to listen, in their hardships, to his contention what they were the Master Race.

The Jews from their suffering at the hands of the Nazis had emerged with a passionate acceptance of the Zionist leadership claim that they were indeed the Chosen Race. The Arabs over the future years, brutalized by the Zionists, and unable to maintain unity among themselves, were soon listening first to calls for Pan-Arabism, and then to what sounded suspiciously like the first rumblings of Arab Zionism. In 1980, one Arab leader was to call Arabs to unity by claiming that they were special to God, because he had sent the last of the Prophets to them, and the Quran had been revealed in Arabic.

There may be something to The Domino Theory after all, but in ways different from Henry Kissinger's claims...



— especially TV — were boring Government propaganda, the quality of journalism often very mediocre. In others, media, business-owned, was brutally anti-government with or without excuse.

In recent years, however, the Non-Aligned nations had come to an understanding of their common problems; the Non-Aligned Movement was formed because the Cold War was becoming too dangerous for the emerging nations; they felt they had no power individually, and could be easily crushed in world politics by the two Superpowers and their satellites, or fall unduly under the influence of one or the other. Above all, they wanted no more involvement in "World Wars" at the instance of the two mighty powers, the communist bloc on the one hand, and the Western Alliance on the other.

It was from a growing awareness of the need to 1) have foreign news reporting that was independent and not only from the monopolistic foreign media empires and 2) to somewhat balance the distortive and ridiculing reporting about themselves, that the idea of a Non-Aligned News Pool germinated. It would of course be no more than a speck compared to the massive Western media empires, and its purpose would be to provide an alternate viewpoint to those empires; obviously it could not ever replace them.

The idea, when first mooted, met with extreme revulsion from the West, from the U.S. government and from U.S. media. When the Non-Aligned sought the necessary licensing of its reporters through the United Nations under the aegis of UNESCO in 1976, there was furious denunciation of the idea. Predictably, Western media would abhor the idea of jeopardizing its virtual monopoly, in much the same way as any commercial empire hated to share the market. But it went beyond that. Moynihan (now made U.S. Ambassador to the U.N.), denounced it with his usual drama and more; he said if it ever came about, the U.S. would have to consider stopping its contribution to UNESCO.

American media denounced the idea in every way. There were no doubt legitimate concerns; there were the objections voiced that in State-controlled media, such reportage would have "Orwellian overtones"; some even expressed the dangers of these Third World reporters having, in effect, the right to present "opposing views". Exactly what was wrong with that? The power of this Non-Aligned news pool would be miniscule; if some of the Non-Aligned nations had "state-controlled" journalism (and they did), why not expose it when they stepped out of line? In effect, the NANP was seeking a measure of self-government, which the colonial western media furiously objected to give.

Even some of the more responsible print media voiced harsh objections. John Marks, of the Center for National Security Studies, commenting on the Washington Post's seething denunciation of the idea of recognizing the NANP reporters, said "*The [Washington] Post* urged the Third World to accept and purchase the products of western news service, such as the *Post's*. Yet some of these same services have been used by the CIA to spread propaganda".

Indeed, the vehemence of Western media's reaction signalled to any impartial observer that despite all the inspiring claims, there were terrifying "Orwellian overtones" behind those very denunciations. It was a time when American idealists revelled in the achievements of the free press during Watergate. But it was, unfortunately, also a time that one could discover that while the "free press" of the time indulged in trite but fashionable criticism of Apple Pie, any attempt to criticize the ingredients that made that Apple Pie rancid was apt to make one an undesirable to



that "free press". It was also a time when media empires were buying up publishing companies, so that The Muzzle over any unpopular criticism was virtually complete. Commercial media empires did not call it censorship. Charles Towers, chairman of the National Association of Broadcasting, in defending CBS's decision to cancel the very popular *Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* because they were very critical of the Vietnam war and the U.S. Government, had provided this wonderful explanation: "Deletion by government command is censorship. Deletion of material by private parties [i.e. CBS] is *not* censorship". Curiously, just a year before, U.S. media had unconsciously demonstrated why it was critical to have an "opposing view" available in international affairs especially when it came to evaluating the politics of any one country. The Emergency Rule declared by Indira Gandhi in 1974, had been furiously criticized by American media. This denunciation, based upon the claim of democratic freedom, of course, immediately cast the critics on the side of the angels. Swayed by the volume of this denunciation, carefully used by the Opposition political parties, it gathered public support in India, and may have at least helped in the removal of Gandhi.

It goes without saying that such Emergency suspension of civil rights can be dangerous, and can be misused. In fact, later, during the Emergency Rule, there was misuse reported. The point to consider is that from the other end of the world, American media deplored, castigated it without knowing why such a risky step was taken, and what it may have accomplished.

In fact, even a quick visit to India during the Emergency reflected the remarkable *progress* during that Emergency. Smuggling, blackmarketeering, disregard for law and order had reached crisis levels before. With the Emergency, prominent smugglers and blackmarketeers were rounded up, the city streets were cleaner than they had ever been, the corrupt were frightened and the cost of living went *down*, when the rest of the world was in the midst of skyrocketting inflation. It was a drastic move, but if tried, one which should have been allowed a chance to alter the habits and attitudes of a people, the majority of whom were illiterate, and the other extreme, the newly rich but very wealthy who had not only become a law unto themselves, but had become the tastemakers. In retrospect, many of the most vocal critics of the Emergency in India (who often pointed to Western news reports to support their criticisms) later regretted that criticism; because with the removal of the Emergency, the corruption and inflation returned with a vengeance. Cost of living has nearly trebled; housing costs in metro areas up 500-1000%, blackmarket money oozes in conspicuous spending that can rival any Western metropolis, gangs abound in city slums and villages. Even aside from Sikh terrorism, the new government does not have an enviable task, by any means. In extreme cases, short-term suspensions of civil liberties *should* be measured by the performance, not simplistic cliches. Did the West not do that during World War 1 and 2? Above all, was U.S. media really qualified to provide swift judgement as it did?

Let us, however, assume that U.S. media was right, as guardians of the free press, in denouncing Gandhi's Emergency because it did encroach on civil liberties. But, then, President Sadat's crushing of Opposition parties, of complete censorship of media critics, even the imprisonment and expulsion of Egyptian journalists of international stature, did not evoke pious horror from U.S. media of similar dimensions.

This is by no means to suggest that all of American media was always involved in political gamesmanship. Historically, American journalism has had the gutsy,

principled reporter and editor, and often, editorials of remarkable substance can be found in one of the major dailies or in a modest newspaper of a provincial town, even today, when the giants have all but cornered it all.

There were some very useful exposés on TV, though usually these were on the dying non-commercial PBS. But commercial TV, too, had a few by the second and third line reporters. But in view of its track record, one had to wonder if the issues of such controversial exposés were carefully considered by the strategists and in the Board Room. These empires could afford to hire the best minds available and it did not take much thought to recognize that it was very good PR to occasionally have controversial reports; the networks' own bosses made sure that, when there was a flare-up regarding any issue, they talked long and often about the "independent press"; such occasional reports drew large audiences, and served to negate in the minds of a gullible public the thoughts of TV's ties to the Op-Con values of the Power Cartel and the networks could take credit anywhere they could — even when undeserved, as CBS did about the Morrow exposés.

Once Op-Con values had taken root among the public, these investigative reports took on a significant turn. Take, as an example, CBS' highly popular *60 Minutes*, the weekly investigative "magazine"-style show. During Watergate and into the post-Watergate "morality" period, this program often had some very commendable reports (especially by Mike Wallace); but then he soon became involved in exposing "welfare frauds" and government waste, during the Carter regime; while he did occasional segments on the doctor and hospital misuse of Medicare funds, the brunt of the investigations were directed at dramatic exposures of individuals (usually black or Puerto Rican) who had bilked welfare or unemployment when they were not entitled. The impression left with the public was that the Carter "liberal" policies were responsible for the waste, whereas in fact the Carter administration had begun from the start to investigate and cut out government extravagance; the wastage was a carryover from previous administrations, willing to be lax about the misuse of funds to discredit the federal programs they disliked. There were to be other CBS "exposés", based clearly upon a pre-determined viewpoint for which professional outside help (paid for) was sought, and at least occasionally, the evidence was heavily slanted and edited to suit a conclusion (General Westmoreland was to sue for one such "exposé", about reasons for America's defeat in Vietnam). The hard-hitting Wallace was eventually even to land up cooing to "old friend" Nancy Reagan in one long segment, to try and establish her as a very responsible and duty-conscious First Lady, when collective media reports had publicized her extravagance and general "let-'em-eat-cake" attitude since entering the White House.

The other "investigative senior correspondent" on the show was Maury Shafer; his was the studiously nurtured image of a Continental sophisticate, only incidentally of the Zionist persuasion, and his segments were more openly in line with Op-Con propaganda. Shafer would do amusing ridicule of the newly rich Arabs (the camera zoomed in a lot) in London and in the Middle East, of the backward Third World, of the glories of the Blue Train and its aristocracy (aligned carefully to Humphrey Bogart and Hollywood movies), and a sympathetic segment with Claire Booth Luce, wife of Time's Harry Luce, in which both moaned the past age when they, the American aristocrats, were the tastemakers of the 1950s. When Shafer did come down hard, it was on segments such as the one in 1983 on the World Council of Churches. Even his tone became gritty as he presented blatantly lop-sided evidence to claim that this religious international organization considered to be so concerned about the



world's poor and against exploitation, was really funnelling much of the donated money to the communists and to terrorists. What Shafer did *not* say at all was that this was one of the very few Christian organizations of worldwide stature which was on record, more than once, as being highly critical of Israeli extremism.

The other two networks of course attempted to compete for the "investigative reporting" magazine show, after *60 Minutes* continually topped the ratings. NBC made abortive efforts (in fact more than one attempt in the future years), with *NBC Magazine*, using — for some reason — the same anchorman, each time, who spelt his name Harrold Dobyns. The format had the right appeal — most segments glorifying America and a put-down of foreign countries (usually Third World), but somehow it did not work in securing good ratings. It may have been because Dobyns was too obvious, though friendly reviewers did not think so (and clearly NBC's research did not either).

ABC's *20-20* was more successful, especially in future years; this was encouraging because it often had more genuinely investigative reporting, even as *60 Minutes* developed puffery and propaganda. Unfortunately, with successful ratings, *20-20* also got puffery (heavily advertised) through inclusion of Barbara Walters' interviews with celebrities (*20-20*'s host was Hugh Downs, formerly senior host of NBC's *Today* when Walters had been his junior).

Along with good investigative reporting, there were the other type, frankly politically inspired; perhaps the outstanding example of the latter was to be ABSCAM. By 1979, the Arabs (now many with Ph.D's in political science) had decided that they needed an Arab lobby in Washington; the aim, a poorly kept secret, was to win congressional favor with political contributions like the Zionists did (or so they thought anyway). It took less than a year to destroy all the Arab hopes. First, TV and print gave extensive publicity to Washington lobbies and the new Arab lobby; hitherto media had very seldom referred to the lobbies, but now it suddenly became big news, in view of the Arab money and how it could corrupt the Congress. In the meanwhile, the FBI had set up undercover agents in a luxury Washington office building in the name of a fictitious Arab businessman. For some reason, the FBI installed a convicted criminal in charge — he was however, reputed to be able to play many roles (though not a politician!)\*. Various Senators and Congressmen were then approached by the FBI undercover agents, to meet the fictitious Arab sheikh. The sheikh then claimed to be willing to spend a lot of money for some business favors. The suite was wired for concealed video taping and for reasons best known to the FBI, NBC's producer Ira Silverman and reporter Brian Ross were apparently given a free hand in filming and reporting the entire scam operation.

Some of the elected officials approached had to be coaxed to come to see the "sheikh", others had to be coaxed to take the money. Then ABSCAM hit the headlines. Some of the secretly filmed segments were shown on TV to home audiences even before the trials — predictably, creating great nationwide interest; the drama was further hyped when the NBC news team was able to be present when New Jersey Senator Harrison Williams was charged by the FBI and could record his expressions

\* The Con Artist was, for some reason, given a lot of freedom to use FBI connections; he used them fully. His wife (in a 1982 interview with *20-20*) talked about her own horror at seeing the home become a warehouse of expensive items. She said she was afraid for her life by speaking out. Before the next *20-20* interview she was dead, presumably from natural causes.



on minicam. All the accused charged a frame, illegal coercion, and most denied taking bribes. Curiously, despite the historical corruption in Congress, that august body decided to be most severe with Congressmen charged in the ABSCAM case, even expelling a member for the first time in its history.

While it was claimed that it was purely an FBI "Sting-style" operation to catch corrupt elected officials, no one ever asked why the bribe-giving "foreign businessman" had to be Arab. *Would that not immediately exclude from the test House and Senate officials who were strongly pro-Israel who would never be enticed to meet the "sheikh"?*

The U.S. has built-in freedoms in some ways that few countries have. Even the excesses of the Secret Services could be challenged by a citizen, at least until the Reagan takeover. The need for a free press was stressed from the very founding of the American Experiment, by Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson had considered it so important that he once said that if there was choice between a free government and a free press, he would choose the latter. In his own lifetime, however, Jefferson had made clear that the nefarious pretenders to "freedom of the press" were destroying it. "The man who never looks into a newspaper is better informed than he who reads them, inasmuch as he who knows nothing is nearer the truth than he whose mind is filled with falsehoods and errors" he wrote.

There were, periodically, examples of the kind of journalism that Jefferson had thought so important in a free society. Even in recent years, there had been glorious examples of it — from the gutsy reporters and editors who often risked and sometimes lost their lives — during the heyday of crime syndicate rule; there had been Edward R. Morrow on TV; the Watergate investigations at *The Washington Post*.

Across America, there were less publicized, but equally laudable examples. A small group of journalists at *The New York Post* sacrificed bylines in order to protest management censorship of an article critical of a major advertiser. A man-woman team of the *Chicago Tribune* set themselves up as bait to uncover corruption among city inspectors of food and drink establishments.

And when an investigative reporter was killed when he was working on the crime syndicate territories in famous Arizona, where he had uncovered what he was convinced was deep involvement of an Arizona senator and his family among other elected officials, an ad hoc group of journalists (from different newspapers) was formed to go to Arizona, break the local censorship of news, and report on the corruption. They never did succeed in full disclosures, but they tried; in many cases their own employers, usually media empires, were not willing to give exposure to the scandal. But the reporters had tried, even risked their own lives.

After Watergate, bright, starry-eyed idealistic youngsters were heading for the profession of journalism, to fight for Truth, Justice and The American Way. Most made adjustments to the reality. There was good money — on commercial TV there was great money — but those ideals had to be quickly forgotten. You played the game if you wished to succeed. You followed the laid-out policy, and you would really succeed if you could read and follow the unwritten and unspoken laws. Mental prostitution was more important than anything.

It was all very late for reform. Yet it was again a time when the horrors inflicted by Special Interest media empires upon the American public could still be corrected, if the public had really understood what was happening. But to do that the public had to try harder. But even aside from the public drift in the "me-first" era into hedonism and make-shift elitism, there were the built-in problems of a society mesmerized by

the Authority of the medium of television; the parameters of its effects on the human mind were still unknown, but studies continued to reveal, it was enormous.

Some studies recently conducted in Europe and in the U.S. provided more concerns about TV's hypnotic power over reality. A group of children were asked to watch a performance of two men fighting on a TV monitor; as they sat watching that video tape, the same two actors were brought into the room where the children were and instructed to fight live just as they were being viewed on the TV screen (on film). The children glanced at them live, but then went back to watch the *filmed* version of the fight.

An accidental confirmation of the same reaction — this time among adults — was apparent in a *Candid Camera* segment (monitored on a re-run). An unsuspecting member of the public had been told to sit in a room and await for someone to call him; a TV set in that room was turned on to a Western video film and he was asked to sit and watch it if he wished while he waited. *Candid Camera* of course, plays such tricks upon members of the public with a hidden camera. As he watched a fight between a Good Guy and a Bad Guy on the TV screen, a door suddenly opened and the Good Guy from the film, dressed exactly as in the film, rushed into the room and asked the member of the public to hide him from the Bad Guy. The hidden candid camera at this point was intended to close-up on the man's face, to record his astonishment and that would be it. But what did happen was that the member of the public hid the Good Guy behind a chair, *then went back to watch the action of the TV screen of the film of the same Good Guy and the Bad Guy.*

Dr. Herbert Krugman, an American psychologist, had found (through tests in which he measured reactions, via a tiny electrode fixed to the back of a subject's head) that while the subject's response to print (i.e., reading material) was active, the fast Beta waves of alertness turned to relaxed drowsiness when the subject was made to watch television. Similar studies in Australia had also shown that the left (analytical) side of the brain lost much of its capacity while viewing TV.

Big Business was now known to be conducting its own studies too — for an entirely different objective. With similar objectives, as in the pupil dilation test, but using electrodes attached to the brain, the rhythms of the respondents' responses were now measured to determine the reactions to advertising commercial and TV programs. And, while subliminal advertising had been strongly discouraged some decades ago (if not banned altogether) by Congress, it is now being allowed — for a good cause, all media hastened to say. It is being used against shoplifting; consciously invisible and inaudible frames were being inserted to warn the public against committing the crime of shoplifting.

Could we be absolutely certain that it would begin and end there?

The public itself could, with some real understanding of the danger have encouraged at least the growth of the non-commercial TV network, PBS, which continued to struggle with bare funds, and pleas for public support. The support was very frugal. So PBS depended largely upon government subsidy and grants from foundations and then, from Big Business. Mr. Nixon was furious with much of its controversial programming and had replaced its President with his own appointee (its charter permitted that), and he had cut down on government aid. Now more dependent than ever upon grants — including Big Business grants — PBS slowly declined into non-controversial programming, then even into programs provided by Big Business patrons (documentaries with only a few PR plugs, of course!); next came documentaries defending Big Business contributions to society, and so on.



In the meanwhile Op-Con writers were lashing out at the Public Broadcasting System just as these new controls were being enforced on PBS during the Ford years. For brevity, we might consider such articles in *TV Guide* in just four months of 1975.

In an article in *TV Guide* entitled "Brought to You by Computer" (Sept 15, 1975), Mr. Doan said that PBS was too automatized on programming and offered no freedoms to its affiliate stations, because of its "bureaucratic insanity". It is impossible to believe that Mr. Doan would not be aware how obsessively computerized commercial TV is. Why then was PBS singled out for this dubious honor? The end of the piece was also highly significant, "In short" said Mr Doan "in non-profit TV, as in more mercenary pursuits, money is what makes the mare go". The inference, however weakly argued, is clear. Don't blame commercial TV for being mercenary. Every one has to be.

Then there began on November 1, 1975 — a two-part article (over two weeks) in *TV Guide* provocatively entitled "The 3 Billion Dollar Gamble" by a Mr. David Lachenbruch. It was accompanied by a sketch of a large bag of money serving as lifebuoy to a drowning TV set. That \$3,000,000,000 was meant to tell the public that an average of \$20 in price increase had resulted in TV sets from the law signed by President Kennedy on 1962 to make the inclusion of UHF channels compulsory on all TV sets. As we have seen, commercial TV had cornered VHF channels and it was only with the weaker UHF channels that non-commercial TV could even exist at all. The article did not give details on how set manufacturers — including RCA, General Electric, Westinghouse and others, so heavily involved in commercial TV — had arrived at the extra cost. Nor did the article point out that by 1975 the consumers had spent \$65,000,000,000 on the purchase of TV sets alone (source: *Merchandising Age: McCain Erickson*, published in TVB 1975 annual broadsheet). What the article did emphasize was that all that \$3,000,000,000 extra expenditure on sets had been forced on the poor public by including UHF channels which the public did not seem to watch.

Just a few weeks later (December 13, 1975) a three-part series (over three weeks) began in *TV Guide* (the magazine it must be understood has grown to its circulation leadership upon programming and articles and tit-bits on commercial TV). This series was by Mr. Benjimen Stein and called, "PBS Under Fire" and among other fierce complaints Mr. Stein had were these against the non-commercial network: 1) the network had given airtime to Shirley MacLaine and other women of a group who had gone to China on an official visit and permitted them to speak in glowing terms about present-day Chinese life. He quotes the head of PBS itself, Ralph Rogers (a Nixon appointee) as saying it was "pure propaganda" and that Ms MacLaine was "thoroughly brainwashed"; (2) Mr. Stein found some programs on PBS acceptable but "it is awfully difficult to find shows on PBS criticizing Russia, China, or pointing out how brutal left-wing dictators are to their own citizens"; (3) PBS was very biased because whenever they had a documentary on automobiles or banks, etc, it was always critical of auto-makers and banks; (4) Public money was being used to support PBS but less than 1% of TV viewers actually watched PBS, and this small audience was the "elite". He quotes Milton Freidman, the "Conservative" economist as saying "It just shows that the rich know how to manipulate the political process to get what they want." (if a true quote, surely a classical example of the Multiple Untruth made famous by Joe McCarthy). Mr Stein adds virtuously: "Since the (PBS) system is funded primarily — more than 70 per cent — by public money that means the average taxpayer is paying for the edification and enjoyment of the well-to-do. Is that right?" This argument



by Mr. Stein was obviously to provoke anger in the public — how dare they have programs which “the elite” like, why cannot they be like commercial TV and cater to the Lowest Common Denominator?

Soon the impoverished non-commercial TV network was showing more and more shows sponsored by large corporations. The sponsor was given proper credit: “Made possible by a grant from” said the announcer and the corporate name and/or symbol remained for a while on the screen. In many countries that itself would have made it “commercial TV”, but in the absence of all other means no doubt PBS had little choice. But PBS’ transition into commercial control did not end there. In Mr. Reagan’s reign, government subsidy was cut even more drastically and PBS was to show commercials — brief ones, a little more sedate, no doubt specially prepared for PBS, but regular commercials. And so determined did it become even before that, it could even do with commercials what the commercial TV stations did not. In a screening of *Julius Caesar* on Feb 14 ’79, during Scene 1 Act 2 (before Lucius and Ligarius arrive), the PBS New York station actually cut into the play to tell you the names of corporations who had sponsored the program.

(viii)

In the aftermath of Watergate, when soul-searching across the nation was real and there was much that needed to be looked at; the laws with regard to presidential powers, the corruption in Congress, political advertising, the lobbies, the laws to redirect the economy on healthier lines, a hard look at the national values and cultural trends, the insane arms race, at media chicanery, at foreign policy. It was a time to consider the most critical need long overdue to reduce the suffocating monopolistic hold on the nation of very Big Business empires, including those of the media conglomerates, while moral indignation and the desire was strong to really determine “where did we go wrong?”; Much could have been accomplished, difficult and very late though it was. The American trait of once deciding on the direction and then going for it with everything, was an important quality that could have made that possible.

But President Ford and media said it was essential now to leave all that Watergate unpleasantness behind and go on. Enough time had been spent in pain and soul-searching, more than any other people would have spent, he said. There were important problems — the economy, the Middle East — that needed all attention. The public agreed.

## *The Op-Con Dragnet*

(i)

The attempt being made by the Op-Cons to project "New Conservatism" as a form of intellectual movement, was very skillfully executed over the next few years after Watergate. Its objective was to draw within the Op-Con fold, all those who aspired for status; it was traditional Op-Con, merely repackaged; it claimed to find new reasons for elitism because liberalism had failed.

There is no doubt that elitism — in the truly progressive sense — has merits; there have always been the more talented, the more gifted and a healthy society must provide for their recognition and their role above the lesser talented; it was also true that in the turbulent Sixties, there had been in some ways an attempt to correct past inequities with unnaturally severe, and simplistic definitions of "equality" in a Democracy. In fact, as we have seen, one of the major disasters of post World War 2 era was to hand over the lethal force of TV to commercial interests and thereby reinforce an unhealthy milieu of social and intellectual mores, distrustful of intellectual pursuits, the glorification of mediocrity in the commercial objectives of appealing to the Lowest Common Denominator in society.

These standards had *not* been created by liberals, but by the Op-Con strategists themselves. It was this hardcore that was now claiming to have an intellectual movement.

The irony was that even among the Op-Cons there were the genuinely talented, gifted, sincere and some who believed in the more humane aspects of elitism, as an important factor in any society. The reason why they saw the entire New Conservative movement as representing their criteria, is because they, like all the rest, subjected through their lives to commercial media's glorification of everything American, had convinced themselves that the Haves in America in fact possessed — or at least aspired to possess — the more enduring, respected, progressive qualities. But if some had, unintentionally, conned themselves into such beliefs, the strategists and the High Command knew the difference. Their intent continued to be for a new Feudalism, under which Money would be the primary — if not the sole — criterion, with God and country providing the drumbeat of emotional, political cadence.

For this reason, the New Conservatives were at least as dangerous in their eventual objectives as the communists.

Was there in fact a deliberate, concerted Power Cartel operation, after Watergate, to draw the public not just to the beliefs and aspirations of the 1950's, but also — when this was so successful so soon — towards the more extreme Op-Con values of the Cowboy Politicians?

And what role did media (notably commercial TV) play in all this? Did commercial media, with profits as its main objectives, merely find the national tilt towards Op-Con values and only add its enormous power to accelerate the move? As we shall see, media's role was vital, critical and would have spelt the differences between success and failure for the Op-Cons. Was media's role accidental, circumstantial or planned? The evidence will have to speak for itself.

Human ego being what it is today, adults do not care to believe that they can be led to think and behave the way media might tell us. Some segments of the public were soon to become convinced that violence on TV had a bad influence on children, but by and large, the American adult refused to believe that he or she, an intelligent member of the world's leading free society, would think or do what TV told them. TV itself, naturally, rejected such a possibility.

What we should consider is how the Op-Con strategists would have evaluated the situation after Watergate and what they might have recommended as immediate and future plans to make the nation move in the desired direction. It must be understood that having Gerald Ford as the transitory President was useful for the Op-Cons, but real hopes and plans had to be with Ronald Reagan. The challenge was tremendous. Those very attitudes which the Op-Con core desired were in dispute.

Let us then see how an Op-Con strategist would have evaluated the situation, in broad terms, and what he would have recommended. It was all a simple matter of common sense and in broad strokes, not at all difficult to second-guess.

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Reverence for the presidency had suffered a severe setback and should be restored; the greatest impact for Op-Con values could be generated from the presidency, especially when revered; what was also needed was that the specific causes of Congressional corruption (the lobbies) should not be highlighted; the waste, ineffectiveness should be mainly treated in cynical general terms as caused by the Democrats and only Federal social programs must be pinpointed as wasteful, causing inflation, (along with OPEC) and budget deficits. Washington's seedy politics should be highlighted as a norm. This would afford the inexperienced Reagan to be perceived as fresh and new, therefore incorrupt.

The Cold War had to be resurrected. It could be a great challenge to convince the people in their fierce anti-war mood after Vietnam; questions would arise about the obvious contradictions — wanting social programs out but a lot more spent on the military budget — yet higher defence spendings were critical not only for Op-Con extremist beliefs but because defence contractors were among the lifeblood, the financiers of Op-Con. The communist must be made the Communist again.

There were other important benefits from the Cold War. It would bring back the "we" versus "they" cult, pride in the country, in Capitalism; it would make people forget their own personal gripes, and lead to the reinstatement of reverence in the institutions of the Military, CIA; pride in being No.1, in Winning, the emotional appeals that could be used so well, with the best Image-Making experts in politics. (There were strategists, many within the Op-Con core, who were quite willing, even eager, to let that Cold War become War; Russia was not at all as powerful militarily as the U.S.; Op-Con special advisers like Edward Teller were convinced that even a nuclear war was survivable; communism was not only detestable in itself but it was its



influence that was making Third World countries complain about the conditions of life under American Big Business. The Op-Cons were convinced that without Soviet encouragement, such resistance would fall to a wimper, at most.)

Extreme care would need to be taken to avoid any charges of racism, however. What was important was to let the poorer countries understand that power of Dollar Diplomacy, the Carrot and Stick policy. Either you side with us, accept our values, our terms or you get nothing. The same threat of deprivation should be the policy towards the rowdy colored ethnics at home. At the same time, the richer amongst them and those aspiring to docile servitudes of Op-Con values, should be treated with kid gloves, which itself would help to counter charges of racism. However, South Africa should be quietly brought back into the family of rich nations, not punished; South Africa had the right idea of the "trickle down" control. There were a lot of Op-Con financial investments in South Africa now. Botha's PR campaign in the U.S. must be aided as much as practicable.

It was also critical to have not only the Zionist leaders within Op-Con but to have all Jews feel a sympathetic identification with the Op-Con objectives, and this identification could be easily achieved through an uncompromising support for everything Israeli leaders wanted. This would win major media's emotional support among Jews in media and many Jews outside media who may yet have liberal views. (Many Jews who were rich were already inclined towards basic Op-Con values, even if they realized that Op-Con core may be anti-Semitic within. But then it was a pragmatic marriage that was sought by the Op-Con, in much the same way as the Power Cartel had joined together against youth values in the 1960s.)

It was critical also to make all references in defence of Big Business as "Business"; the smallest business must be made to feel at all times that all arguments supportive of "Business" includes them all. The growing demand for tax reforms and the closure of tax loopholes must, as always in the past, be countered by demanding tax relief for *all* citizens and business, to "stimulate the economy". The average tax payer can be soothed by this, and it would provide added support from the business community generally. It would get results in some decrease in social services, but that would only irritate the lowest rungs of society, because the rest would have the compensation of some saved dollars.

An even more important wedge, especially between the white middle income and the lower strata, would be achieved through additional tax benefits to the former, in some ways. The best possibility lay in property tax relief — again the consequent loss in services would only anger the Have-Nots. The dissenting voices during recent years, especially the anti-Vietnam War movement, have given extensive adverse publicity to the role of American business and the CIA in the Third World. This has raised questions in many younger segments of Americans against the established view of American generosity to the underdeveloped countries. No doubt the liberal opposition will try to publicize more dirt about multinationals and the secret services. The feelings of concern that may have been generated among the public regarding our roles in these countries, and the public sympathy of recent years for the poor, can both be suitably stifled by carefully and gradually emphasizing in the present "me-first" mood that (i) social programs (health, education, welfare) are destroying the budget, causing all the economic ills along with OPEC and (ii) the imports are the cause of layoffs and losses to American business and most of these cheaper imports are from the Third World with their government subsidies; (iii) social programs for the minorities within the U.S., such as quotas in employment and education are a denial

of the rights of others; the emotions aroused from enforced busing of school children have already done much to shift white America against government social programs.

The intellectual and the idealist should continue to be made ridiculous and suspect, even more than before. Pragmatism must be recognized as the healthy, *intelligent* alternative. Eventually, computerized thinking must become the highest form of intelligence, whereby the parameters of intellectual frontiers and human endeavors are *predetermined*. Deeper studies by the masses of political, social, economic issues must be discouraged as boring and passé.

The Western Alliance must be made into one homogeneous entity, with the U.S. as its director. The growing resentment towards the many coloreds now in Britain should help greatly in popularizing New Conservatism in Britain. The work commenced by Nixon-Kissinger in this regard must continue. All efforts must be made to have New Conservative governments elected in Europe, loyal to the U.S. Conservatives. It is very important to discredit the British dissidents and their political parties — British critics, as had been evident in the 1960s, have great influence on the American public. Instead, the friendly forces in Europe must always be in the news. Eventually, the American Rich and the British Upper Class must become one. Utopia.

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It is not difficult, then, to conjecturize what the Op-Con manifesto would aim as its broad objectives.

The public had been made to feel that with the Watergate purge everything was now a matter of returning to normal. But if one were to have second-guessed the Op-Con objective at this stage, and to track media over the following years, there were some fascinating trends in TV and print that became apparent. Again it must be noted that while the media tycoons may have shared some, if not all, of these objectives, there were many professionals who may not have. Some criticisms did crop up, naturally, from media commentators through sincere concerns, from tactical needs or in response to public concerns (e.g. when the anti-nuclear movement arose).

It would be obviously impossible to provide all of such findings here; but we shall take a few representative examples from TV programs and advertising; and from print, we shall track as an example not one of the obviously sensational tabloids, but mainly *Time* magazine, the most influential newsmagazine, with the highest international circulation of all. *Time* may (for many people) also be the most credible source to quote, to confirm events and facts.\*

(ii)

Ford pinpointed two major causes of the economic problem. One, he said, was Government extravagance through the various Federal programs and now the current economic inflation was, of course, from the OPEC oil price hikes.

\* Harry Luce's distortive tricks had become, with his success, a "tradition" in contemporary journalism; *Time* magazine also used them of course, though it has softened in extremism, especially after him and the turbulent '60s'. The intent here will be to ignore *Time's* advocacy journalism, but quote facts reported by it in body copy, as evidence.

Whatever the mystery behind the OPEC price hikes initially, there were now serious concerns in Washington about the effect the oil price increases would have upon other Third World raw material suppliers. Many of these commodities were priced based upon colonial evaluations, just as the oil price levels had been based until now upon the directions of the Western Consortium. The OPEC revolt was sure to encourage price hikes by many of the supplying countries of the lower priced raw materials and commodities. They may even justify such increases because of suffering greatly from the escalating oil prices they would now be paying. It was important, therefore, to take some strong action against OPEC as a deterrent to other suppliers, and be offensive towards any trends in price hikes for other raw material suppliers. The best that the Ford administration could do was to think about the possibility of invading the Arab oil fields, and for Ford to attempt warnings and a few public lectures to OPEC; however, the OPEC, intoxicated perhaps from its new power and affluence, asked Ford not to "shake his finger" at them because OPEC could shake its finger back. Having tried the Stick, Ford now used the Carrot. The U.S., he said, would have a more balanced approach to the Middle East, giving equal weight to the grievances of the Arabs and Israelis. Ford had quickly released much of the Nixon White House staff (especially after his Presidential Pardon of Richard Nixon) to claim that his administration would be an entirely new one. He had of course retained Henry Kissinger and he now announced that Kissinger would resume his "shuttle diplomacy" in the Middle East to bring about a solution to the Arab-Israeli problems.

The Middle East was very much the central issue now. Presumably for what he had done in the Vietnam War, Kissinger had now been awarded the prestigious — and financially rewarding — Nobel Peace Prize for 1973. There were some who felt it was obscene to award a Peace Prize to someone whose real role in Vietnam and now, even in the Middle East, was more that of a machiavellian Dr. Strangelove than a peacemaker. He had aggressively promoted arms sales as just another export. In his book *Ends of Power* (1982), Seymour Hirsh would later disclose that Kissinger actually advised Nixon that it was politically useful to let the people of Biafra starve during their struggles. In fact, even as he received the Peace Prize, Kissinger was, while proclaiming himself a peacemaker, reportedly recruiting mercenaries and unofficially sending the CIA to Angola. He denied it hotly at the time, but the facts emerged later in the 1975 Senate sub-Committee hearings. That sub-Committee would also elicit — then quickly hush up — the Nixon-Kissinger role in the overthrow of Allende in Chile.

But to American media, and through it the public, Kissinger was the sensational genius foreign policy expert, perhaps the best in history. Some of media were concerned when it seemed as if he could not successfully keep his skirts clean of involvement in the Watergate scandals — Kissinger had so far claimed to be entirely innocent and unaware of all that was going on in Nixon's White House and at CREEP. His own handwritten authorization of illegal wire-tapping of his assistants came to light (he was sued by Halperin, one of his assistants) but that was soon out of the headlines; media also reflected concern among some Zionist leaders, when he seemed to become too close to Egypt's Sadat. But Kissinger was loathe to explain all his moves. He thoroughly enjoyed his fame as a genius, as the Great Lover (media had made him one), and the headlines he struck by some dramatic move. In fact, his 'friendship' with Sadat was aimed to achieve the most dramatic results. To explain his objectives publicly in that would have been self-defeating.

Sadat suffered more than the usual psychological problems of a Third World



leader. Contrary to what the American public had been made to believe, the Arabs were terrified of Israel's military might and were no match for it. Sadat, despite the hostility of U.S. media interviewers after the 1973 war, had tried his best to show how much the Arabs wanted peace. The 1973 war, however, had boosted the Arab morale considerably; though they had lost more territory, eventually they had, for the first time, inflicted heavy casualties on Israel.

And now Sadat was in the clouds. He claimed to be the primary architect of the Arab performance in the War and he was becoming recognized as such. He had fervently yearned for friendship with the U.S. through the years; instead of the rebuffs of the past he was now getting it — and that on a personal level — from no less a celebrity than Henry Kissinger; "Henry" was his friend, he told U.S. media happily; "Henry" was his brother; so thrilled was Sadat with being on a first-name basis with "Henry", that sometimes media interviewers had to add Kissinger's last name to avoid public confusion; Sadat had ended the merger with Syria under the "United Arab Republic" banner. He had even "thrown out" Russian advisers and rejected further Russian aid. He was now banking entirely on "Henry" to solve the Palestinian problem.

In his book *A Dangerous Place*, Kissinger's close friend and crony, Daniel Patrick Moynihan (then the U.N. Ambassador) assured his readers of Kissinger's emotional commitment to Israel; "Vietnam never absorbed him [Kissinger].... by contrast Israel was never far from his mind."\* Having aborted the U.N. Geneva conference after the 1973 War, Kissinger shuttled between Israel and Arab capitals; eventually, in 1975, he had negotiated the Sinai agreement which proved to be the costliest war settlement for the U.S. in its history — it would cost the negotiator (U.S.) \$500,000,000 in payment to Israel plus other guarantees, such as (1) the U.S. would never talk to the PLO until it agreed, unconditionally, to recognize Israel and (2) the U.S. would agree to supply Israel's oil needs for five years, in the event Israel could not find any other source (currently, Iran was a major supplier).

These were remarkably generous terms and promises for the foreign policy genius to have agreed upon; some might even argue that by aborting the U.N. discussions — which would of course have dealt with the central issue on the Middle East continuing crisis, the Palestinians — Kissinger had merely chosen, by his "step-by-step" diplomacy to please Zionist leaders who wanted this individual bargaining with individual Arab states and not the U.N. conference; (2) that Kissinger had chosen this obvious diversion to delay, not help, resolve the problems; (3) that he was merely on an ego trip, seeking the limelight and center stage, at great danger to world peace (the U.S. and Russia had almost confronted each other in the 1973 war); and (4) while these diversions might please some Israeli policy makers, they were not in the interest of the Israeli people themselves, especially in the long run.

But the U.S. media campaign adulating Kissinger's brilliance was such that every move he made — or attempted to make — was applauded as yet another masterly

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\* The political naivete of Third World countries like India, sometimes defy description. In this book (published 1975) Moynihan makes a passing but explicit statement that when he was Ambassador to India, Indira Gandhi, the Indian Prime Minister, was in the pay of the CIA (receiving money for the Congress Party funds from the CIA). The fact that Moynihan, a senior U.S. official, strongly pro-military and CIA, decided to volunteer such information should have been the signal of a calculated smear. But the Indian Parliament fell for it hook, line and sinker. There were major investigations, and one MP stoutly said "If Mr. Moynihan has said it, it must be correct".

diplomatic achievement. While Kissinger's "shuttle diplomacy" achieved nothing of any real substance, media claimed it did — that he had humiliated the Russians by winning over the confidence of the Arabs, notably Sadat.

"Europe is grown old with folly" Noah Webster had said and cautioned America not to imitate, and "stamp the wrinkles of decrepid age upon the bloom of youth"; to Thomas Jefferson, there was only one criterion for the American nation to follow in determining foreign policy "I know but one code of morality for men, whether acting singly or collectively" he said.

But in the 1970s, to Kissinger, and an admiring media (and consequently an admiring nation), the fun of foreign relations was in playing chess with the adversary; the inspiration for the "New Conservatism" was 19th century diplomatic cunning of the colonial powers, not the simple mindedness of a founding father.\* Check-mating Russian influence in the Middle East, after Russia had been the Arab defender as recently as the 1973 War, was a great achievement.

In the meanwhile, U.N. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim of Norway was making impatient comments about the delays in bringing all the involved parties to the U.N. conference. Even some European leaders were becoming impatient with the delays. Mainly, however, the Third World countries were voicing their despair. For years now, Israel had merely ignored U.N. resolutions about withdrawal from occupied lands; no resolutions displeasing to Israel could be passed in the Security Council anyway because the U.S. vetoed them.

As time went by, the irritation of the U.N. General Assembly grew; American media reported the U.N. calls as being instigated by Russia because it felt humiliated from being left out of the "negotiations" in Kissinger's "step-by-step" diplomacy.

Then in a burst of pentup fury, the U.N. General Assembly passed a resolution equating Zionism with racism; in the discussions preceding the resolution they said that Israel was a Jewish state, qualifying only Jews from around the world to be its citizens, and, pointing to its treatment of conquered Arabs. Clearly, the objective of the resolution was one of an angry gesture of no practical value whatsoever.

All hell broke loose in the U.S.; from coast to coast, media denounced the U.N. anti-Semitism, its communist influence, its Third World arrogance, its Arab oil bribery. In Washington, all elected officials denounced the "racism" resolution, and some Congressmen demanded the ouster of the U.N. from American shores; bills were to be introduced in the House and Senate to cut the U.S. contribution from the U.N., to stop all contributions, even to get out of the U.N.

The highly respected TV news stars on all three networks, and every major newspaper denounced the U.N. resolution in the strongest terms, and with it what they felt were growing dangers of the current U.N. composition, the many new independent Asian and African countries.

The occasion was to signal a major change in the attitude of the American public. Media criticism of the U.N. grew steadily from now on, and, predictably, the American public became increasingly contemptuous of the international organization — soon media was questioning the problems to New York City from the presence of

\* No one ever asked Kissinger, why he had such a heavy German accent. Kissinger was eleven when his parents brought him to the U.S. to escape the Nazi brutalities against Jews. He had lived and been educated in the U.S. throughout from then on; of course the German accent did provide a certain aura of diplomatic brilliance, a "charisma".

the large members of U.N. diplomats and delegations, about their freedom from parking regulations, freedom from being charged with any crime.\* The public anger grew.

In 1945, the U.N. had been formed with American leadership and with American principles; it was designed to be a truly international body, representing all the people of the world, regardless of race, creed, rich or poor except, of course, for the veto power allowed five countries. It was felt then that if justice could be meted out through this forum of world nations, all the people of the world would feel secure that the world was now civilized enough to know right from wrong, and apply the power of the world body to redress just grievances. Justice would be blind to all other considerations.

Naturally, in the real world, such purity does not exist. And no doubt the use of Big Stick was, at times, necessary. But now it was becoming dangerously prevasive, emotions ran high. The newly freed states in particular, and the economically poorer countries in general, were bitterly resentful of any condescending attitudes, of being squeezed in power play between the Big Powers, reminiscent, all too often, of colonial times. The disillusionment of finding that instead of the claimed impartial rules of justice, gross double standards could be applied at the behest of a super power, and contemptuously at that, had a bitter, castrating effect.

At that, if the U.S. Ambassador and his delegation had approached the delays in the resolution of the Middle East matters with more civility, knowing all too well how vulnerable Israel and the U.S. stance has been since 1948 on the issue about the rights of the Palestinian people and conquered territories, such reckless, angry gestures could have been avoided.

But to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., the vital issues were apparently quite different.

Moynihan was quickly to become one of the chosen few to represent New Conservative "intellectual" image, with maximum media reverence. His forlock and unusual speech pattern (Gaelic-American?) had at least as much image-making value as Kissinger's German accent, though perhaps not as much as William Buckley's eyebrows and painfully structured polysyllables.\*\*

From the dizzy heights of New Conservative elitism, Moynihan practiced his contempt towards the underdeveloped Third World at the U.N.. His attitude and words reflected the belief he held towards the formally colonized that they were apt to blame the West now and former colonialism for their own inherent deficiencies. It was not unlike the belief he held with regard to American blacks, as a result of which he had recommended "benign neglect" towards them to Richard Nixon.

Moynihan's background was not unusual among the "New Conservatives". Moynihan was born in Oklahoma but grew up in the "Hell's Kitchen" seamy area of New York where his mother had a bar; he grew up from shining shoes into an academic before entering politics.

Now a big favorite of media, Moynihan's spicy comments towards the Third World were often reported even on TV, which very seldom covered any U.N. proceedings. The U.N. resolution condemning Zionism as racism found Moynihan

\* In fact, New York businesses earned \$700,000,000 annually from the presence of the world body and the diplomatic corps.

\*\* Line drawing illustrations in a modern baroque style, depicting these awesome geniuses appeared everywhere, in posters and in magazine articles. The settings were of 19th century neo-classical European thinkers.



at his theatrical best. He denounced the Third World, the communists, the Arabs, the PLO so violently, that he was later reported to have even worried the U.S. State Department and some allies. The fear obviously was that his vituperations may produce even more hostility — as they had in the passage of that resolution itself.

But Moynihan himself was not worried; dramatically walking over to the Israeli Ambassador, he embraced him and dropped a few more contemptuous remarks at the Assembly. Moynihan's eye seemed not on Washington but on New York, where he had become an adored cult figure. And Moynihan did become a Senator from New York at the next elections.

TV and print rhapsodized his "Irish temper". The "Irish" label was a very critical one for Moynihan's political success. For instance, in one article alone in *Time* magazine, (Jan 26 '76 issue), he was called "the fighting Irishman" and the article referred to his "Irish plaid hat" "Gaelic eloquence" "cerubic Irish face". It must no doubt have been most irritating to him and his admirers when Ivor Richard, the British Ambassador to the U.N. reportedly called him "a trigger-happy Wyatt Earp" (the Wild West gunslinger).

Moynihan's theatrics resulted, predictably, in no softening at the U.N. but in fact, from Israel's standpoint, a dangerous development. By now most nations of the world, including most European nations, had acknowledged the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Now, the U.N. voted to grant the PLO official "observer" status at the U.N., with its own permanent U.N. delegation. And the U.N. invited Yasser Arafat to address the General Assembly.

By this time, Kissinger had finally had to end his "diplomatic shuttle" and it was officially admitted not to have produced a Middle East solution. U.N. Secretary General Waldheim renewed his demand that the issue must return to the U.N. conference for resolution, in accordance with procedures of the U.N. Charter.

But then, very fortunately for Israel (some might say an amazing coincidence), the Lebanese civil war broke out and would never end. Beirut and some of the oldest cities in the world would be bombed and shelled into ruins, thousands killed, millions made homeless. And more than ever, the Middle East problems would come to be viewed as communal, Christians and Jews versus Muslims; in fact, of course, the Palestinians had always comprised — as they still did — of Christians and Muslims. The most "militant" of the PLO sub-groups was headed by George Haddad, a Christian. The PLO representative (Ambassador status) was Terzi and then Antoine Noel, both Christians. The Ambassador of the Arab League in Washington is Dr Maqsood, a Christian. Former Senator James Abourezk, who founded and heads the Arab Anti-Defamation League in Washington, is a Christian.

### (iii)

Christianity had been always important at the grass roots level in America, though there had developed significant differences in its interpretation and practice between the Midwest "Bible Belt", the Southern Baptists, the Black Church, the Mormon, the Catholic, the Revivalist.

In fact, this deep-rooted morality was the strength of America; historically, many were descendants of the hardy homesteaders; outwardly, too often, the reflection of what media attested they should be, yet deep within, they had the healthy elemental no-nonsense belief in right and wrong. From this latter trait, many had come to understand through the recent upheavals, the need to consider issues, and reforms in

more than the single dimension they had become accustomed to do. Ethics and character meant something to many of these church-goers.

The permissive aspects of the New Morality, the seeming disruption of society, the extremism of the SDS, the Black Panthers, the Weathermen, had frightened them in their placid lifestyle. They were enthusiastically drawn to Spiro Agnew's "Silent Majority", only to have Agnew revealed as a corrupt official, then Nixon, the other clean Christian and his Watergate.

The electronic evangelists bombarding their homes through radio and TV provided a link many found irresistible. The link was Jesus, Bible, Christianity. They may have had problems accepting, once again, the total devotion to Big Business, Military and Country, but it was also most reassuring to find the reestablishment of these values, preached by Harry Luce, McCarthy, Nixon, Agnew now being so enthusiastically linked by religious preachers, with the word of God. Even the concept of "born Again" Christianity had great emotional appeal. "born Again" also meant leaving behind all the recent tumults and traumas, leaving Watergate and soul-searching behind, to be pure and clean into the bright future. This "Born Again" interpretation appealed to the young and old.

"Born again" Christianity was now raging across America through the new evangelists. These evangelists used TV, Radio and modern marketing and research techniques. No doubt some were very genuine and sincere in their objectives while others (as was soon revealed) were raking in fortunes and keeping them. There was the "700 Club" with Jerry Farwell operating from Richmond, Virginia, which had its own Christian TV and Radio Broadcasting network with 130 TV stations and 300 radio stations in the U.S. and its own satellite international broadcasting. There were those like Rev. Robert Schuller who had started a Drive-In Church; he was so successful with his use of "modern marketing and advertising techniques", that he was reported to hold classes for other clergymen on how to succeed in selling Christianity. "Find a need and try to fill it" he told them; he taught about the Seven Marketing Principles which included the use of movie stars and other celebrities; avoid controversies, and do not attack sin. Christianity and Capitalism were one, he said. At his Church he preached to overflowing audiences and was reported to be able to collect \$1 million in a day. His *Hour of Power* on 148 TV stations and innumerable radio stations reached more millions and a few years later, in 1979, he was building another \$4 million Drive-In Church. With Farwell, "Moral Majority" was soon into politics and a stronghold constituency of the "Right Wing Conservatives", fierce Ronald Reagan supporters, who were to play a very important role in presidential elections later.

The electronic evangelists, like the revivalists of the past, denounced wayward paths away from Jesus. But unlike the revivalists of old, they did not target upon hedonism of the present era, upon greed, upon the directives to care for the poor. Instead they emphasised that faith in Jesus was what washed away all sins, to become "born again"; they pounded into their audiences the extreme *religious* duty to respect the governments, its institutions; respect Business, the free enterprise system, the Christian duty to destroy godless communism. They charged that it was critical to have a strong military to defend the Christian state. At each session, they displayed proofs of miracles.

All sins could be washed away with faith, though one of the most difficult to wash away was political radicalism against the government.

Even the ever popular Billy Graham, for instance, voiced the opinion at a Las

Vegas rally (televised on the *Phil Donhue Show* in 1980) that the Bible did not make gambling a sin. He received thunderous applause from his Las Vegas audience.

The evangelist lobby in Washington was said by news media to mainly want the Bible to be reintroduced in public schools, and an end to abortion. But the Judeo-Christian clergy was also working hard against the growing "cults" in the U.S., some offshoots of Eastern religions and others which claimed to be moral Christian alternative to the established churches and synagogues. Soon media was helping a great deal with news and entertainment programming against the cults, especially the Moonies, the Scientologists, the "People's Temple" (which ended in a mass suicide of its 911 disciples and leader Jim Jones). Just what the real stories were about these groups that were said to "brainwash" young people, was hard to know. Certainly there were freakish cults galore by now, 3,000 of them, with an estimated eight million members in the U.S. The establishment religious groups had former policemen, CIA and FBI agents work as "deprogrammers", as did parents of offspring who had joined some of the groups. Rabbi Maurice Davis was considered a leading "deprogrammer". The deprogrammer's job was to take the "victim" physically and hold him or her by force if necessary, and work on them to make them change their minds ("undo the brainwash"). Some "victims" changed their minds, others did not; some charged tortures were used to make them change.

In effect, it was a forceful campaign to bring back the young within the fold of "traditional" religion, which were the organised churches of Christinity and the synagogues of Judaism. In some ways, it was an understandable concern, though it sought to achieve not a healthy dialogue but a blackout of all opposing or challenging views.

And the evangelical groups were working furiously on the scrutiny of published books, especially text books and library books in schools. Since 1557, the Vatican had compiled a list of condemned book (*Index Lebrourm Expurgatorius*), updated from time to time. By now over 5,000 books had been condemned, ranging from the understandable condemnation of prurient literature to those seen as critical of the Church; the condemned ranged from Flaubert, Balzac, Zola, Croce, Spinoza to Gibbon's *Decline and fall of the Roman Empire* and H. G. Wells *Outline History of the World*.

The McCarthy Cold war hysteria of the 1950s had, as we have seen, resulted in extreme terrorism to discourage any liberal views, and suspect books had been destroyed from libraries, the criterion being not religion, but any views critical or questioning of U.S. government policies.

In the brief liberalism of the 1960's new text books had begun to examine — and sometimes correct — historical distortions and misplaced chauvinism. But now, the new evangelical and Op-Con movement was working to re-establish the previous (1950s) norms, with the rationale of upholding God-Business-Country. And it was working. School text books were being denounced if they strayed, "recommended reading" was challenged. There was opposition, confrontation from those who believed the constitutional right of freedom of expression, and from serious educators, but the McCarthy era had shown how such opposition could be crushed. In reality the correction of text books to reflect unpleasant facts of history and in the social sciences had merely begun. The intent clearly was to nip it in the bud.

But even as "born again" Christianity was gaining so much ground, the growing sexual freedom and changing mores did not seem to be at all impeded. By now, one



out of every two marriages ended, on an average, in divorce; one out of every five adults was likely to be a step parent; reported illegitimate births were close to a million a year; *official* abortions (not including the millions unreported) were 1,400,000 a year; and a million youngsters ran away from home, usually to end up in big city prostitution. Premarital and extra marital sex was now an accepted thing among even the "conservative" adults in the Midwest, with the emphasis on faith washing off all sins; Heaven was the assured destination. On one *Phil Donahue Show* (NBC, Chicago, November 2, 1978), a CUBE computer was hooked on to get instantaneous responses from home audiences to this top-rated daytime show, largely watched by middle and upper income women. One question posed to the audiences was what they thought about sex before marriage and living together before marriage (an estimated eight million unmarried couples lived together in the U.S.); 53% of the women said (in response to the question) that it was alright to do this. Life after death, drew a strange, but significant response: 50% said they believed there was an everlasting hell, but 76% believed there was an everlasting heaven.

There were on the other hand also, other less flashy religious groups and individual priests now more active than in the past in the care of the downtrodden and the wayward. There were priests without enormous TV budgets who worked to support youth during the Vietnam war (such as the defrocked Jesuits, the Berrigan brothers); there were Protestant priests who were now more active against War, Big Business and media; there was a Jesuit priest who kept open house in New York City to rehabilitate the million or so teenagers who ran away from home each year, to end up in prostitution. The individual Jesuit priests involved in political movements for the people were soon to be silenced however (in North, Central and South America) by the edict of the Pope against any involvement in politics.

In this milieu, the media empires and their giant corporate advertisers faced a conflict of interest. On the one hand, they were all for the Conservative Judeo-Christian tradition, the God-Business-Country glory, because it was directly in their own interest and because it paid to be along with the growing movement of the very powerful. But there was the other important consideration. Sex and violence were more popular than ever among America's millions. Sex always sold products too. So they came up with their own compromise: soft porn, patriotism and religious faith.

In *Charlie's Angels* the girls were detectives of good family backgrounds, church going, intensely patriotic, who overpowered the Bad Guys even while they displayed their own "T & A" (as much as the networks felt they could); presumably, feminists were to be satisfied by the fact that the girls had physical and mental prowess to defeat men. In *Three's Company* (a soft porn version of a 1972 British comedy) the new sex symbol Susan Sommers showed as much body and indulged in as many *double entendre* as she could; but the script made her a clergyman's daughter who had (she said) grown up with "traditional" values, so everything was alright. Soon, even Barbi Benton, the Playboy girl (Heffner's special) was wholesome and acceptable on TV, with a series of her own. The *Hee Haw* crowd were Southern, Godfearing, country music, whose girls just happened to ooze out of their clothes. Football's pom pom girls (cheerleaders) were now more popular than ever on TV as celebrities. The rivalry continued between football teams on whose cheerleaders were more scantily clad. But football was as American as Apple Pie; so that was alright. The Soap Operas had everyone sleeping with everyone else but the good were also religious, patriotic with proper love for money and government.

The major conglomerates were all for the Moral Majority, with its God-Business-Country theme. But they had to sell too, in order to sponsor evangelists. For instance, in foundation garments, the accent as always was on pretending to have a better figure than you did, and one that men would lust after. One Playtex Bra commercial at this time asked women to wear a bra "for a figure *they* can't help noticing" and in another its wearer drew whistles (in its sales promotion Playtex also included a whistle). There was an Underall commercial in which a chorus shouted "Alright America, show us your Underall" at which a bevy of beauties came to the camera in extreme close-up to show their highly defined bottoms. Bristol-Myers provided another brand of morality in a Clairol Herbal Essence Shampoo commercial (which incidentally won advertising awards for excellence). In it, a young, pretty, wholesome looking girl says "I swear I've got more hair" several times through the commercial (accompanied by the honor sign); what she was supposed to mean was that she *looked* as if she had fuller hair from using the shampoo.

Jeans were popular a few years ago because they were informal and had also come to signify contempt for the dressed-up Establishment. Now there were designer jeans, costing three, four and five times what the regular jeans had, because they carried status and were all very heavily advertised. Sex was used freely in jean commercials; as teeny boppers (under thirteens) were also a big market, sexy boy-girl situations were freely portrayed of the kids too. And Brook Shields, the child model-star was soon in a new phase of sexy commercials — in one she was clothed in Calvin Klein jeans; she says, "You know what comes between me and my Calvins?" (Close-up of her crotch) "Nothing" she breathes.

Television networks had obviously decided to see how much Soft Porn and Violence the market could take before objections from influential groups became too strong. Objections were not necessarily consistent; religious groups objected principally to visual sex or situations permitting sexual permissiveness; they did not usually object to the traditional "affairs" between just about all the characters in daytime soap opera serials, perhaps because there was a heavy aura of moral Op-Con values hanging like a benediction over them (Proctor & Gamble, the soap giant now an empire owning many companies, still produced most of them). PTA's and women's groups objected sometimes to "sex and violence" especially when children may be watching.

No one of course voiced any protests against "I swear I've got more hair" type commercials.

There were concerned groups who objected to much of TV fare, but they had, in comparison, little clout. Somehow, when such objections came to be loud enough to become news, there were psychologists and sociologists who would write in major print media, arguing that the impact of TV on human behavior was minimal — a viewpoint of course that the TV network moguls themselves voiced. There was, they said, not reliable evidence to suggest that such relationship between street crime and TV existed. The issue usually arose now when one or more perpetrators admitted to having planned a crime after watching a movie or from being an addict of a certain TV serial.

In time, such concerns became so weak, that they seldom, if ever, made news, except on occasions when such relationship became too coincidental to ignore.

On other TV programming trends, there was certainly no opposition from influential groups. Among the first steps to stem the tide of New Values had been a rash of TV entertainment programs aimed to glorify the "fabulous fifties". This



served many purposes; it added a pleasing wholesome image to the era of the Cold War, Dulles-Nixon world leadership era; it was nostalgic for middle-aged America; it was the 1950s in its outer husk *but sufficiently changed to recreate it in the image of the late 1960s*, so that contemporary youth would be made to have more respect for that era.

It is impracticable to provide examples from all programs, so we must restrict ourselves to a few examples from the most popular TV fare.

*Happy Days* was the most successful of the series on these lines, launched as early as 1971. Well written and acted, it was predictably a success; its hero "The Fonz", the leather-jacketed "hip" character appealed to the young by his traits, but he also proudly lived by Op-Con values, despite his waywardness. Music and styles were of the 1950s but values and lifestyle of the 1950s were altered to make them as sophisticated as the present and audiences loved it. The father of the family ran a hardware store in Milwaukee, Wisconsin but lived in a house that was a mansion, no less. The family manners and clothes were straight out of a book of etiquette. There was no flashiness. There was not one crew cut. The father wore three-piece suits of subdued colors; the mother dressed as if she were out of a Parisian fashion magazine. They were both college graduates and Republicans ("all my family have been Republicans for generations" says the father once). "The Fonz" became one of the most popular cult figures in America for many millions of fans. Among his significant characteristics was his inability to admit he was wrong or to say "sorry" or admit that he had lost. The series was to become one of the most successful and long running in TV history. As the years went by, the scripts provided political messages too. For instance, in one segment, it showed how young people for Adlai Stevenson (the Democratic intellectual) were against Eisenhower in 1952 and 1956, not from convictions but through peer-group pressure, the guys because there were pretty girls in the election campaigning. "The Fonz" however, was a fierce Eisenhower supporter as were solid citizens like the father. In another segment, (in the post-Watergate era) there was even a satire about the Woodward-Bernstien Watergate investigations. Significantly, the "break-in" presented in the script was for a *good* purpose, to retrieve material being used for blackmail at the school.

In the heat of the youth revolt, TV had allowed "liberal" writers and producers to air what the network bosses would never have allowed before. But even these "liberal" writers and producers had to be aware and experienced in what to criticize and what not to criticize; they had to be experts in the art of persuading and if they criticized a sacred cow, then there had to be counter-balance, it had all to be within reason and with a suitable denouement. "Liberal" writers, no matter what their ethnic origins knew there were some sacred cows that had to be very sacred, even to the most principled writers and producers. Others had learnt from experience that the axe would fall from above if they stepped out of line...as the *Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* had discovered when CBS cancelled the show in 1971 though it had been a highly popular series.

Among the new shows with a definite new values appeal were those that started brilliantly but then slowly, carefully, changed gears when the time was right and nationwide popularity and trust had been won. And there were those whose format struck pay dirt and which were quickly copied for pure exploitation of Op-Con propaganda and for the lowest common denominator among the audiences. An example of the latter was *Laugh In* and its imitation *Hee Haw*. The former struck brilliance at times with its one-line "black" comedy and was an instant success. *Hee*



*Haw* was developed and featured Southern "country" humor, country music, and half clad girls, all voicing Op-Con values at every turn, all in the attempted format of black comedy.

An outstanding example of the top-rated programs that won confidence and then slowly began to change values and seep in their own brand of propaganda, were the Norman Lear comedies. Lear's *All In The Family* commenced in the late 1960s and became an instant hit, soon the top rated of all TV series. Everyone in the industry was surprised at its success. Adopted from BBC's *Till Death Do Us Part*,\* it dealt with racial bigotry of the lower/middle income, white Protestant father towards all races, colors and religions not his own. One important reason why it did get watched so much, some reviewers said, was that despite the ridicule of the bigot in the scripts, he was also permitted to say things and use words towards the other races and creeds which many a bigot watching could no longer do freely, but enjoyed hearing said.

But soon it was clear that producer Lear was very much a commercial TV man with (as became clear during Carter's regime) very strong political desires; plots of his most successful show *All in the Family* began to show the arguments and views of the "radical" daughter and son-in-law as being rather outrageous; they could find fault with Archie (the father) when technically he was at fault, but one found one's sympathy was with him. It was done with considerable subtlety, as was the slow change in one's feelings towards Archie: he was a bigot, but now a loveable bigot. He might be against other races, but he also suffered from extreme and often unfair application of First Amendment rights. He truly loved his wife, daughter Gloria, and later, despite their mutual hostilities, his son-in-law Mike. He was a man with little education, but with the American dream of becoming wealthy; he had suffered and now was at an age where he had no patience with these new-fangled intellectuals. All he wanted was to make good — and the system was at fault, at times, so were the childish application of idealism by Mike and Gloria. His wife, at first a straight "dingbat" though loveable, was soon (as the women's movement caught on) one who stood up to Archie, and was almost always right. She was *not* clever yet she was usually *right* and she often solved family problems that baffled the others. She took a job away from home, and continued to "grow". The "radical" daughter and son-in-law slowly became more Op-Con. Until the early 1970s, the young ones always won audience support with their peace and love and brotherhood views. But now they often voiced "traditional" views as they matured, were employed, money-conscious; when voicing liberal views the scripts had Mike often the more stubborn, even foolish in his sophomoric cliches and extremism, and finally he ends up destroying his own marriage through the remnants of his radical views and Gloria, now definitely chastened, returns with more sympathy and understanding for Archie. Then the other cast members left, the show was renamed *Archie Bunker's Place*. Archie's lovable bigotry was as vocal as ever; he did not use words like "coon" "junglemonkey", but he did say "wop" "chink", sometimes "dodo", but the situations showed often that Archie was unfairly muzzled, at least on occasions when the illegal — and blundering — Spanish-American employees and usually dozing Chinese (employed in Archie's bar) were really exasperating. Archie spoke freely of course against foreign countries and his spicy comments later against Jimmy Carter

\* Several British series were being adapted; *Sanford & Son* (Steptoe & Son) had become a great success, as *Three's Company* was to be; but some failed, such as *Beacon Hill* in which a Boston "aristocracy" was supposed to replace the Edwardian upper class of *Upstairs, Downstairs*; *Fawlty Towers* adaptations failed twice.

and his weaknesses, compared to the strong Nixon foreign policy, invariably produced cheers from even the studio audiences. Archie had reformed now in one respect; he now still voiced occasional comments about the "Hebes" but he had now changed enough to adopt a Jewish girl, and after initial resistance, accepted the fact that his niece was "going steady" with a Jewish lawyer.

Other "new values" series were also soon moving the same way. Lear's other hits, like *Maud*, an outspoken liberal woman, was now becoming enraged and involved in situations where (having learnt the hard way) she clearly projected a "conservative" attitude. She stressed her patriotism more and more. Her black housekeeper was soon replaced by a British cockney who, with all her many failings, is particularly lovable because she has great respect for Amercia — and succeeds, in an episode full of patriotic sentiments, to fulfil her long-time dreams of becoming an American citizen, with considerable help from Maud. Just about every one of the "youth" oriented shows were now stressing that unrestrained idealism of involvement with Eastern religions was not only dangerous, but often phony. Maud's own nephew, who comes claiming to be totally idealistic, and heavily into Yoga and love and peace and against materialism, is found by Maud to have left a girlfriend pregnant, and run away.

Soon, the ridicule of foreigners was back too, but with more subtlety than before; in another well-produced and successful series, *The Bob Newhart Show*, for instance, a French psychiatrist comes to Chicago to attend a convention (Bob himself is a psychologist), and is a house guest of Bob and his wife. On more than one occasion during the episode, he gives a cab driver what the latter calls "funny money" (French) leaving Bob to pay with "real" money. He has, it turns out, not come with his wife, but a girlfriend, whom he treats with all the contempt of a male chauvinist pig, making her carry luggage and ordering her around until she breaks down and weeps. The Frenchman (Pierre) tells Bob and his wife Emily, that his own wife knows of his arrangements and she herself always takes trips with her own boyfriend. Pierre is not only a shabby houseguest, but a rude and conceited one. He attempts to teach psychology to Bob, to ridicule Bob at which Bob (to the accompaniment of loud audience applause) says "the Sorbonne is not all it is cracked out to be" and in other ways puts him in his place. The difference between the uncouth Frenchman on the one hand, and the quiet refinement of Bob and Emily on the other, is remarkable.

By the time President Ford took office, blacks were now featured prominently, even in their own TV series; the plots revealed that they shared the American Dream, mostly had middle-upper income homes and schooling. Even when poor, their values, and their aspirations were clearly those of Middle America. Usually the blacks depicted as intelligent, were those who had "made it", either through a chain of laundry businesses and showed weekly how much respect anyone got with money (as in *The Jeffersons*) or were trying to make it and alongside showing disdain for foreigners in general and those who now lived in the U.S. but spoke bad English, like the Peurto Ricans (as the loveable black bigot Sanford does in *Sanford and Son*). Sanford's bigotry towards Spanish-American presumably pleased black bigots, just as Archie's was enjoyed by the white bigot.

Westerns and "history" were now updated to provide a form of "edited nostalgia". Now the Wild West had plots that were very much of a contemporary strain, and the young in them often spoke and acted like the youth of the 1970s, sometimes voicing even similar values. History stressed American elitist heritage now more than ever.

*The Waltons* was an instant success, and remained a favorite over the years; it



depicted family life in a very small rural community in the Depression era, promoted as a kind of "docudrama". While the Walton family spoke with a somewhat rural accent at the start, and wore clothes in the style of the late twenties and early 1930s, young Waltons were almost interchangeable with the youth of the 1970s in their views and ideas, and soon — as the program grew in popularity and continued season after season — in their awareness; their views were by then tempered by Op-Con values. And while very poor, even by Depression standards, they were full of cultural awareness and social niceties. (In sharp contrast, it may be worth noting, the first true documentary ever produced by visual media was in 1928 called *Stark Love*. It was a true story about a rural community of the time in a secluded segment of the Carolina hills. All the principals in the documentary except one girl actress were the actual inhabitants of the community. The documentary projected some remarkable facts for posterity. The members of the community — except for wearing clothes, being white and having some knowledge that they were of British extraction — were almost interchangeable with any aboriginal tribe of Africa. Women customarily did all the hard work, not the men. There was no privacy at all so that family members did *everything* in front of each other — from toilet to making love. Young people fornicated, then if they wished to stay united, they listed their names among other couples; every few months a priest arrived from a neighboring township to pronounce marriage vows *en masse*).

Game shows and talk shows were returning to glorifying America, but with more subtlety than before. Commercial TV had learnt a great deal from the turbulent years. Chauvinism had now to be approached differently than before. Even on the talk show format a more careful approach was advisable. A talk show host, instead of the indiscriminate claims for America's superiority practised in the past, now had to mildly criticize some aspects of America or Americans (very mild) or even give credit to some foreign country on some issue, and only then follow up with strong claims of praise for America. Political commentators had to make the same circuit; even when they criticized something American — usually of the *past*, not present — they gave great credit to America for this criticism itself: "no other country would criticize itself as we do". On TV this statement was always followed by loud applause when a live audience was present; if the applause was not loud enough of course, it could always be "sweetened" to be made louder, for the benefit of the home audience. But increasingly, studies showed Americans were now more than willing for praise for America, after the traumas of the past. Once again, to sell, you had to flatter.

In an article *27,000,000 People Go To A Party* (the estimated number who watched talk shows), Harold Glemence commented on the techniques that guests on talk shows were taught by their own image-makers to use. "If the guest has been abroad, he can exclaim with an air of defiance 'I don't care what anybody says, I *love* America. This is the greatest country in the world'. The fact that nobody disagrees with him is besides the point; the audience will burst into a roar of approval for his fearless stand." Foreign celebrities were usually well trained to criticize other countries, often their own and praise America, with predictable audience approval of course. American celebrities could now do it too, especially towards a Third World course. A country and did most forcefully when they had something really important to sell. A case in point was Rex Reed, the American movie critic and occasional actor. On January 16, 1976 Reed came on *The Tonight Show* to sell something (it may have been a new book he had written) and talked about his recent trip to Asia. He had found it so unpleasant, he said, that he was able to appreciate America a lot more than



he ever had (loud applause). Perhaps inspired by this response of cheer, he elected to let himself go even more than may have been discussed with the *Tonight* staff. He gave remarkable details of his sufferings in his visit to India, where, he said 1) he had stood at the Taj Mahal and watched children being eaten by vultures on the Ganges River; 2) there was so much disease, filth, people dying all over the city that even the pilots of American planes, when on a layover in Calcutta, never got off the plane but stayed on board and ate canned food; 3) There was 99% illiteracy in India and the population was 750,000,000; 4) People in India were bitten so often by snakes that they got immune and addicted to the poison.

It was not the fact that Reed's comments were so exaggerated (just a reference to any reliable book could have corrected that). What was significant is that audience reacted so favorably to his ridicule. Only a few years earlier, celebrities making such trips would have come back and talked of the need to help the poor people of the world, and if the trip included India of being enchanted with the spirituality, of visits to Yogis, etc.

For reasons best known to itself, the Indian Government, like the Mideast countries, had never lodged formal protests with the U.S. Government (as far as is known) about the imagery ingrained by American TV and other media. In this instance, however, it was reported in overseas media that a senior Indian official, inaugurating a session of the Non-Aligned Countries Press Pool in 1976, mentioned this Rex Reed interview among others, as examples of Western media distortions over the years.

Continuing studies among Americans also disclosed by now that a "cultural explosion" was taking effect. It had been media — especially TV's — policy, as we have seen, to glorify the mediocre as the ideal in Americana. From inception, TV had projected the imagery of those who were fond of Shakespeare, the fine arts, classical music, as dull, boring, ripe for humorous digs, and often snobbish and/or villains. In the aftermath of the turbulent years, with American young enamored with the idea of European culture, TV and other commercial media were now to jump on the band wagon, heralding a "cultural explosion".

The transition from the traditional contempt, towards the cultural subjects to this new infatuation, was achieved with TV's usual speed. But in the process, some of the problems inherent in past attitudes manifested themselves on TV. Hitherto, Shakespeare had been used on TV only as a source of jokes, and for this purpose two or three quotes had been used and abused ad infinitum. One was "To be or not to be". It was simple enough to interject, with or without reason, into conversations, in comedy skits, or even to communicate a general impression of culture by a few actors who wished to have such an image. Another favorite was a line from the balcony scene of *Romeo and Juliet*: "Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?" had been used by actors and comics till it was threadbare. Incredibly it had been used with a wholly incorrect interpretation of the true meaning of the words. Presumably one comic took it from another, as did his writers and producers, without any attempt to check on what the words really meant in Shakespeare. In the play itself, Juliet speaks these words as a plaintive cry, asking why her loved one had to be Romeo Montague (and why, by implication, she had to be a Capulet) causing so much misery for their love, because of family hatred. What she is really saying is "Why did my love's name have to be Romeo, a Montague?"

No so on commercial TV. Comics for years used the lines to suggest that Juliet, at the balcony, is looking around to find where Romeo is.

Now, in the throes of a "cultural explosion", TV celebrities, actors, talk show and game show hosts and news performers attempted to create a cultured image for themselves overnight, memorizing one or more quotes from Shakespeare, or by claiming to be familiar with Shakespeare without offering anything more than the claim. Occasionally this resulted in some remarkable claims and unnoticed *faute paux*. In 1975, a typical example was on the *Hollywood Squares*, the most popular game show. A celebrity was asked "Who said 'Oh, that this too, too solid flesh would melt, was it Hamlet or Falstaff?'" The celebrities were always briefed on the answers before the taping, they "may then know or divine the answer". The celebrity in this case, a TV actress and former Broadway performer, said "Hamlet". Thrilled by the applause that greeted the announcement that this was the right answer, the celebrity decided to explain and thereby, presumably impress the audience with her knowledge of Shakespeare. She said she knew Falstaff was fat and flabby, so naturally it could not be he talking about "this too, too solid flesh". Peter Marshall, the host, and the other celebrities applauded this clever piece of reasoning along with the audience. It was *not* a put-on.

Such occurrences were not unusual. Even as late as 1979, when presumably the show business world had had much opportunity to become more familiar with the "cultural" subjects for business purposes, one found remarkable interpretations of Shakespeare. On *The Tonight Show* in early 1979, for instance, a very popular leading actor told Johnny Carson that his daughter was very literary, a Shakespeare "buff". She was, he said, also a dedicated feminist and he talked about how he had teased her recently (thereby attempting to enhance his own image — along with that of his daughter — as "cultured"). To point out to her that even Shakespeare believed that men were stronger than women (the daughter was small and not very strong physically) he said he had quoted the line "Frailty, thy name is woman". This, he said, had so frustrated her, that she did not know which way to look (loud audience applause and laughter). The real meaning of the phrase of course is the opposite of what the actor claimed it to be. What Shakespeare really means is that men are made frail (vulnerable) through women's power over them.

Game shows by now were once again very popular and prolific. The payola scandals, which in 1959 had resulted in a Congressional inquiry into the corruption and staged game show winners (abortive of course) were now forgotten. Even game show hosts involved in those scandals were now back. Some contestants still claimed that the selection of contestants were blatantly partial, but no one could really prove that. The games themselves ranged from partially intelligent to the totally inane. Flashy disco settings, and flashier hosts were now the trend, presumably because the audiences liked them that way. However, in deference to the "cultural explosion", literary questions (from children's fairy tales more often than not) were occasionally thrown in. Some quiz shows asked questions like "Who painted the Mona Lisa", offering three names to choose from, while one (*Tic Tac Dough*) even asked "Who is the Vice-President of the United States?" (also offering three alternatives).

Game shows were among the most profitable programs for the networks — aside from the advertising money, the shows usually offered lots of brand merchandises with selling copy from the "Voice Over" (the time spent in these promotions were not considered part of the advertising time by FCC or NAB).

Perhaps the most successful of all game shows was *Hollywood Squares*, on the air for over fifteen years, every day in daytime and twice a week in prime time. Monitoring it could be taken as fairly representative of the better quality game show.



Because of its popularity, it can also be taken as representative of the vehicle frequently used for propaganda. Consistently, the producers and the host, Peter Marshall projected a politically "Conservative" stance, and unashamedly promoted "Op-Con" attitudes and its politicians. Its treatment of foreign countries, especially Third World countries, was in keeping with this political stance. Monitoring some of the programs of *Hollywood Squares* provides its own proof. Consider a few representative examples:

- 1) According to research, the French picked money over good health and love as essential to happiness (July 30, 1975).
- 2) In Egypt people are afraid of being bitten by camels as we are of dogs (mid-1975).
- 3) Frenchmen spend three times as much on their cars as they do on their wives (mid-1975; authority quoted was a study from an item in a Pittsburg paper).
- 4) Islam means a place one longs to visit (December 17, 1975).
- 5) Question about "Abdul sleeps on a bed of nails" (July 30, 1974). The same question was repeated in the *Match Game* show, having the same producers. (Abdul of course is a Muslim name, the Yogis, as penance, sleep on nails).
- 6) In Egypt you can buy a wife for \$200 and a camel (February 9, 1976).
- 7) Many people believe that if they die on the south banks of the Ganges they will turn into donkeys (July 1975).
- 8) Soldiers in Persia were paid in donkeys (November 21, 1976).
- 9) One out of three women living in Venice is a drunk (late 1975).\*

More monitoring of just this one top rated game show over the following two years was to reveal some more remarkable examples, as we shall examine later. Soon it was to be adapted for British TV also.

The ones truly bewildered and crestfallen by the sudden and growing national turn to the "right" were the poor, the elderly; the disenfranchised blacks and other minorities were utterly confused. Only a few short years ago, they had suddenly felt their hopes rise with the youth and black movements, the great attention their plight received in media, and the programs that were being initiated to help their lot. Now, just as suddenly, it seemed they were out of fashion, even the villains of all America's economic woes.

Not all the blacks felt this way. Many had benefited from the quota system in education and jobs to get far more ahead than blacks ever had. Some blacks by now were brief-case carrying corporation men and women. Gone for them was the contempt and hostility towards "whitey's values".

Some who had not were merely waiting to be wooed. "Soul" in effect was now no more than a description of a form of black music. Money was the measure of all things for many of them too. Predictably, TV emphasized that a lot, in the new black programs it had each day. Like *The Jeffersons*, if you made money, you had "a piece of the pie". Other TV programs showed blacks as prosperous, sophisticated, totally accepted. Many blacks preferred that image to the own reality they knew.

Some former black extremists (in real life) were now "conservatives" too. Eldrige

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\* In yet another game show from the same producers, *Hollywood Sweepstakes*, one of the celebrities was asked (December 19, 1975) "What Indian stands facing East, throwing corn to the blowing winds as a religious rite?" Answer by celebrity (Chuck Woolery): "Moslem".

In another show *It's Academic* a quiz show of school and college students, a question asked was clearly intended to suggest that Egyptians still worshipped crocodiles (March 13, 1976).



Cleaver, the Black Panther militant, elected not only to return to the U.S. after striking a deal with the authorities but announced that he was a "born again" Christian, firmly patriotic — so patriotic in fact that among his new idols were Patrick Monihan (who he said "did not go far enough" in his denunciation of the Third World) and Ronald Reagan.

Not all black leaders had made such sommersaults. Jessie Jackson continued to ask blacks to improve themselves and not to fall victim to false values and flattery.

America's other ethnic minorities had been generally passed over in the recent "values" movement. The American Indians were almost unaffected by the dramatic turn to the "right". They had never been allowed prominence during the turbulent days anyway. Many Americans genuinely felt for the brutal injustices that had been, and continued to be, meted out to the Indians, but TV had never given the American Indian cause any major coverage, so that cause had never become truly fashionable. Later they did get coverage briefly, when they attempted to militantly take over Wounded Knee, South Dakota, to call attention to their plight. Most Indians remained on reservations; suicides were plentiful, barren lives the order. Attempts were now underway in Congress to abrogate all treaties with the Indians and take them off lands which were being found very rich in mineral deposits (including uranium). Occasionally the Indians managed to get some facts across to those who would listen. Russell Means, one of their leaders was brought by actor Marlon Brando on the NBC's *Today* show (Brando tricked NBC into letting the Indian leader on) in 1978, when Means asked host Tom Brokaw if he knew that 43% of Indian women of child-bearing age had been forcibly made sterile by the Government recently without their consent; if, said Means, he knew, why had he not told the nation, and if he did not, why had he, a prominent journalist, not known about this havoc?

There were Spanish-Americans who were prosperous and very much part of Op-Con, and there were the rest of them (chiefly Puerto Rican and Mexican-Americans) who were the struggling minorities, in many ways worse off than the blacks because of language problems and because TV strategists had decided not to eulogize them, as they had the blacks. Even the "liberal" TV series told America where these Spanish-Americans belonged, with their low Effective Buying Incomes. "Equal to me?" asks Archie Bunker (the loveable bigot of *All In The Family*) of one Puerto Rican American "You are not even equal to him" he says contemptuously, pointing to an educated and prosperous black next to him, and the black solemnly agrees. It was done in laughter but it was capsulized why commercial TV had decided to make the lower-income Spanish American the new Negro. In *Sanford & Son*, the loveable bigot is a black junk dealer, and his frequent contemptuous remarks against foreigners (in which he includes Puerto Ricans who in fact are American citizens) always drew much audience laughter. Sanford's son, portrayed as a "liberal", defends the butt of the humor but he does it to show *charity* far more than to point to a mistake in values. All research showed by now that blacks spent more per capita on many advertised products (in their income levels) than any other group, including whites collectively. And they watched more TV too.

Hyphenated Americanism (pride in one's own ethnic origins) was now also being re-introduced as valid and good. Mainly this pride in TV programs was voiced by Irish-Americans, Jewish Americans and blacks. There was, said TV commentators, nothing wrong with this. It was good. Forgotten were the words of President Woodrow Wilson in 1915, when he cautioned naturalized Americans of foreign origins against the tendency to remain part of the groups or the countries they came

from. "A man who thinks of himself as belonging to a particular national group in America has not yet become an American" he said. But in the 1970s, ethnic parades and holidays took on greater meanings — often hidden meanings. TV programs enhanced the pride. Then came Alex Haley's *Roots* about his attempts to trace his African ancestry. The TV series based upon this became a record-breaking success. It gave greater fillip to ethnic pride and the old desire to seek "upper class" ancestry to all Americans. "Search" firms mushroomed all over and advertised heavily to proclaim their ability to trace American ancestry to the Old World.\* Americans by the hundreds of thousands soon claimed to have traced their ancestry mostly to old "upper class" European families. Some changed their names or their spellings to conform to what the "search" firms said was the family-name. Many displayed family coats-of-arms and crests at home and some even wore them (as did a contestant later on TV's *Match Game*, Oct 22, 1978). Television and radio and print carried extensive advice from experts on how to trace family trees and psychologists were brought on to reassure Americans that it was perfectly healthy and normal to want to trace one's family back to some fine European family.

Group thinking was now back with a vengeance. Perhaps the best example of how successfully this caught on, was revealed some years later on NBC's *Tony Brown Journal* (August 5, 1978), when the host (a black journalist, not "establishment") and his guest for the segment, Erwin M. Levine, a Jew and founder of the "Pluralism" movement (propagating group action by Jews) agreed not only on the great merits of ethnic pride and solidarity as an important element in the spirit of America, but also denounced "the myth of individualism".

The effort to take the country back to Op-Con values however, required that possible opposing influences should be silenced as much as possible. Opposing views of individuals and groups could of course be controlled through commercial media — TV, radio and print. And news events, at home and abroad, could be communicated as commercial media chose to report them. The horrors that now developed in Lebanon provide a good example of this reporting.

(iv)

Lebanon had always been unique for its beauty and its historical significance. It was part of the cradle of civilization, an international playground and banking center, its capital city of Beirut one of the most beautiful in the world.

The French were awarded Mandate over what became Lebanon and Syria among other territories after World War 1, in the fragmentation of the defeated Ottoman Empire. In 1943, the French provided a peculiar legacy in the form of a "democratic constitution" to the Lebanese. It said the President must always be a Maronite Christian as must the top Army brass, and the Prime Minister must always be Sunni Muslim. It was a peculiar quota system of power, an imbalance that would

\* As an experiment, this writer wrote to one of the heavily advertised firms — Halbert Inc., Bath, Ohio. In its impressive reply the firm said the Munjees were a very old European-American family with their own coat of arms (photograph enclosed). A plaque, (in gold and bronze) they said, was available and the family tree. It may be noted that the Munjees are an Asian family and in the known ten generations, no one until now has migrated to the West (excluding business and education trips).

undoubtedly create disturbances in future years, despite the fact that hitherto Christians and Muslims had lived in harmony there for many centuries.

That resentment was not long in coming. In 1958, it developed into a Civil War and those favoring revisions in the Constitution and free election won. But the U.S., under Eisenhower-Nixon-Dulles, the bastion of democracy and free elections, sent out troops, suppressed the turn towards free elections and installed a Christian Maronite Army General Chehal as President. The U.S. troops stayed on until the opposition had been suppressed, then left.

Suppression of public feelings of injustice cannot be achieved indefinitely by fear and so there was another outbreak in 1962, also forcibly suppressed. But by the early 1970s, wiser counsel prevailed and in the Lebanese Parliament, agreements were being reached to conduct open elections after the term of President Franjieh ended in 1975. There was once again harmony between moderate Christian and Muslim leaders.

Two internal factors would play a prime part in what was to become a doomsday-style horror for Lebanon. One was the small band of Christian extremists. Pierre Gamayel, a Fascist extremist, had been so enamored of Hitler and Musolinni that in 1936, after visiting the Nazis, he had returned to form a Fascist group of his own. He called it the Phalangists, after Franco's Phalangists of Spain, who had in 1930 with help from Hitler and Musolinni, (while the rest of the world looked on) created a brutal "Civil War" in Spain, eventually overthrowing the democratically elected people's government. The other factor was the Palestinians. In 1970, given an ultimatum by the Israelis of dire consequences if he did not expunge the Palestinians from Jordan, Hossein had ordered his troupes to a bloody battle with the Palestinians and ousted them. Many of the Palestinians had come to Lebanon, a large number of Palestinian refugees were already in Lebanon, allowed refugee status by a compassionate Lebanon Government. But since 1970, segments of the PLO had turned radical extremists, convinced that only violent irritation could keep the world aware of the Palestinian plight, which, they felt, it had all but forgotten in the years before when there was no PLO militancy. Some of their terrorism, such as the highjackings and the Munich massacre were so reprehensible that it was very destructive to their cause but presumably they did not care, in much the same way as the IRA, the "Red Army" and the like did not.

Now the Palestinians conducted "Suicide Missions" into Israel from Lebanon. The individual attacks were known to spell death for the participants but that was, they felt, their only recourse against Israel's military might. Israel retaliated with heavy bombardment upon Lebanon, which of course killed many Lebanese and made more homeless. A furious Israel was offering a similar alternative to the Lebanese government as it had to Jordan — get the Palestinians to stop their border irritation or suffer the consequences. The Lebanese Government pleaded inability to stop individual suicide missions; each time there was a PLO strike into Israel, that might or might not cause any injury or death in Israel, the latter responded with heavy shelling and bombardment of Lebanon; even far-away Beirut was not spared. Lebanon periodically took up its grievance against Israel with the United Nations; the U.S. veto aborted any resolution condemning Israel.

In the meanwhile, the extremist Phalangists had joined hands with Israel; with money and military supplies and training from Israel they were ready to fight the PLO within Lebanon; the problem was that despite all of Israel's help, they were still a fringe group, far too small to do so even aided by Israel's air strikes. Then a militant



mercenary, Major Haddad, had been found. He and his band were trained and equipped by Israel. In traditionally casual, "duty free" Lebanon, borders were hardly patrolled.

In 1975, President Franjeh was about to step down from his presidency, and Lebanon was to have a new constitution and free elections. For the vast majority of the Lebanese, therefore, there was no reason whatsoever to destroy themselves in a Civil War. And yet they did. It was the free elections that apparently were objectionable to the more militant "Christian" elements. The Phalangists and the Haddad band were into open warfare with the PLO; suddenly it was Lebanese Christians Versus Muslims, especially on American TV news.

Despite the foreign money, arms and training, and despite the periodic airstrikes of the Israelis, the Phalangists and the Haddad band were not winning. The fact was that the vast majority of the Lebanese people, Christians and Muslims, abhorred the Fascists and even more, they resented Israel's dictatorial attitude towards Lebanon. The street battles that now commenced in various Muslim sections of Beirut, quickly flared up however, as Muslim extremists joined the PLO. Acts of violent provocation including the murder of Karim Jamblat, leader of The Druze (the Druze were *not* Muslims, though originally of Muslim heritage) unleashed more fury. Even as the riots reached dangerous proportions, moderate Christians did not take sides; eventually President Franjeh (a Christian) and his party were as strongly opposed to the Phalangist trouble makers as were some of the Muslims (Franjeh's own son and his family were eventually to be killed by a carefully planned Phalangist terrorist attack, which even *Time* magazine was to report).

In 1975, however, within a few weeks of the outbreak of the violence, the Phalangists were being routed, and were seeking shelter now in the Christian enclaves of Beirut drawing more Christians into the fray. Only a miracle could have saved the Fascist organization now. However, that miracle came from American TV News, the U.S. Government and Israel.

On TV News each day, the three networks began with urgent and provocative choices of word, to describe the "Civil War" in Lebanon. The "Christian Right Wing" were being killed by the PLO and the "Muslim Left Wing". Walter Cronkite on CBS in a throbbing voice told America's millions that unless they received some assistance all the Christians of Beirut would be starved and slaughtered. The "Christian Right Wing" at the Lebanese-Israeli border (Haddad's band) were also being exterminated. The TV networks dutifully repeated Israel's urgent message — that it would not allow "Lebanese Christian brothers" to be massacred and if the West, the Christian world, did not do something, Israel would have to invade Lebanon and save them.

TV did not go into first causes — then or later — to explain how and why it had all started. It did not explain why the Phalangists who were opposed to free democratic elections without quota were "Right Wing" and why the PLO (whose most militant wing was headed by George Habbash, a Christian) and who comprised Christians and Muslims had become such opponents of "Christians", or for that matter who the Druze were, why some of the various communal labels were on *opposite* sides.

In the meanwhile, the U.N. and the U.S. government induced Syria to intervene. Whether Syria saw the need to do so in order to avoid Israeli invasion of Lebanon, or was willing to accede to the U.S.'s urgent appeal, remains unclear. Syria was one of the "moderate" U.S. friends in the region.

Syria sent its troops into Lebanon *against* the PLO and the Lebanese Druze and Muslim forces, to save the Phalangists. The fortunes of the "Civil War" quickly changed. But with the "Muslims Left Wing" now pushed into the defensive, and the Phalangists saved, Israel commenced heavy bombardments into what media called "PLO terrorist bases and training camps". Entire villages were obliterated. The ancient "Muslim" towns of Sidon and Tyre (where Jesus was once said to have walked) were rubble ruins, with incalculable dead and injured. And the Phalangists, along with the Haddad band, were now again on the offensive. Too late, Syria realized that it had been duped. *Time Magazine* (June 14 '76) confirmed the Syria-Israel alliance of the time and admitted that Syria's intervention to save the "Christian Right Wing" had changed the fortunes of the "Civil War".

Now the Phalangists were emerging as the powerful military force, Haddad's band had been made virtual lords of a segment of Lebanese territory by Israeli forces. Surrender by the terrified Muslim villagers of Southern Lebanon was not good enough reason to spare them. In one of the major massacres of the time, the mass killings at Tal Zaater refugee camp received some international publicity. Eva Staal, a Swedish Red Cross nurse, was wounded in one of the bombardments and shellings. After returning to Sweden for treatment, she emotionally told reporters about the atrocities. Nearly 20,000 shells had been dropped and surviving victims tortured and all after they had surrendered. About 50,000 people had been killed in 52 days of incessant shelling of the camps. "International opinion must be told about Tal Zataar... Olof Palme (then Swedish Prime Minister) why haven't you taken a stand?" she asked.

Individuals Jews in and out of Israel (outside the earshot apparently of U.S. media) continued to speak out. Gottfred Newburger, an American member of the Neturei Karta, the worldwide Jewish religious movement, said in 1976 "Human life is sacred and human rights are not to be denied by those who would subvert them... Some Zionists however may differ." Sheila Ryan said "We say their salute to Israel is a salute to racism", and Marion Feinburg, once a leading figure in World Zionist Organisation said "Zionism does not speak in the interest of the Jewish people... Zionism is a betrayal of the Jewish people because it separates us from the Palestinian people". In the "Peace Now" movement in Israel, such sentiments were mounting. In Israel, many of the young were reacting in much the same way as American youth had reacted to the Vietnam War.

But in America, under the guidance of U.S. media, it was not so. And politicians, aware of their need for contributions to their campaign chests, aware also of the enormous power wielded by Zionist lobby groups, were unwilling to consider the *real* interests of the U.S., and of the Jewish people of Israel, and the long-term interests of Jews everywhere.

One Senator was an exception, as he had been for two decades. Senator William Fulbright Jr. (of the Fulbright Scholarships) had been the first voice in the Senate to oppose Joe McCarthy in the 1950s, was also the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee which first called the Johnson administration to answer about the Vietnam War (despite the fact that both Fulbright and Johnson were Democrats); and he was also the lone voice in the Senate to speak out, since the 1960s, against the U.S.'s obsessive identification with Israeli leaders and U.S. media's propagandizing on behalf of Israel. In 1974, even before the Lebanese civil war, when Israeli "retaliatory" and "pre-emptive" air raids and shellings were destroying Beirut and South Lebanon, Fulbright had spoken out on Capitol Hill. That same year, speaking



at the Middle East Institute Conference, he said, "I have been disturbed by what has often seemed to me an arbitrary and prejudiced standard of 'newsworthiness' in the national press, especially as applied to the Middle East. I have noted repeatedly, for example, the quantitative disparity between press coverage of Palestine guerrilla attacks within Israel and of Israeli attacks upon South Lebanon although the loss of civilian life in the latter has almost certainly been greater. I have even made a statement on the subject in August 1974 but the statement itself was ignored". Fulbright's analysis of the Mideast conflict never got media coverage — even when copies of speeches were sent to all the media representatives in advance. Occasionally the exception was *The Christian Science Monitor*. Other representatives' statements critical of Israel also never got little or no press coverage — and no TV coverage at all such as the call by 200 U.S. clergymen at a press conference in this period upon Israel to recognize "the rights of displaced Palestinians, Christians and Muslims to return to their homeland" in keeping with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

## (v)

Inside the U.S., a variety of politicians were, to use Swedish nurse Eva Stall's words, "taking a stand" but on other issues; the year 1976 would be a presidential election year and a year of great celebrations. By approved count — from the date of the first signatories to the Declaration of Independence in 1776 — the nation would ring in celebration as it had never rung before, with every conceivable sight and sound proclaiming that it had stood by its founding principles.

Normally, Op-Con politicians managed to discipline their individual ambitions in order to present a unified front in their presidential campaign — for many years, the liberal mood of the electorate made it hard to win anyway. Even Nixon's elections, as Op-Con strategists knew, had been the result of fortunate coincidence in 1968 and brilliant, if unethical, manoeuvres in 1972. Besides, Op-Con politicians heavily financed by Big Business, stood to gain in many ways even if they did not become President as long as one of their kind did.

Liberal democrats had no such compensation; they depended on the public — and occasionally on the unions — for their political funding. Presidential elections cost now an average of \$40-\$50 million in advertising the candidate up to November 4. Public support was critical; even if it meant being humiliated by media, they had to seek, *scrounge*, for media exposure. If they lost, or did not run, they did not usually have great financial benefits as their Op-Con counterparts did, so there was no real compensation in dropping out for "unity".

The 1976 campaign among the Op-Cons was, however, to be different from the past; there was optimism that the nation was turning to their values. As a result, there was competition already surfacing in 1975. Democratic and Republican Op-Con presidential hopefuls were "testing the waters" to determine their support — financial and otherwise; they were having studies conducted to determine issues they could claim as their own; most Republicans recognized that Gerald Ford was one of their own, yet were sure they could do better than him; but he was the incumbent, and that had great advantages.

The Op-Con extremists did not even have any doubts that they should be in there with Reagan — so fast had the nation turned to Op-Con values, that it might be even ready for Reagan now. If not, it would be a useful trial run.



And so, by the second half of 1975, President Gerald Ford was already starting to become nervous with political problems. Elections were more than 18 months away, but opposing candidates were already beginning to campaign. The Vietnam mess was over for the U.S., and anti-war sentiments were ebbing. Ford claimed that though there was "detente" with Russia, America should have a strong "defense" and while he felt the country should economize in every way on Government spending to fight inflation, Military expenditure should be kept up and increased; in recent years we had become too severe on military spendings, did not increase its budget enough, he said.

The Military itself, as usual, provided several bits of information to show that Russia was catching up on military strength; it was critical that "defense" expenditure should be increased substantially. Media reported and held many discussions on Russia's growing strength. Every year about a few months before the budgets were drawn up, this pattern had worked. This year, it got special help from "Scoop" Jackson and Ronald Reagan, among others.

By now Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson ("Conservative" Democrat) had already begun his campaign as a presidential candidate; he had two powerful lobbies backing him, the Zionist and the Military. Jackson went further even than the Military did — he said the U.S. had been "giving in" too much to Russia that it was a very lopsided arrangement of "detente". Economic pressure should be applied to make the Russians realize that America insisted Russia allow all Jews to leave. If the Russians did not agree, an embargo should be placed on all trade. He raised a bill in the Senate with Moynihan, to stop trade if all dissidents were not permitted to leave Russia.\*

Russia reacted strongly to these statements and decided to end even the trade discussions then in progress. Russia had a policy that all communist countries had of making it difficult for its citizens, to leave. Under communist systems, with free education and other facilities provided to its citizens by the state, the state felt it had the right to deny immigration after investments of the State in each citizen. Of course, from the standpoint of our free societies, such denial was morally wrong. Yet even *Time Magazine* conceded (Nov 22 '76) that at this time Russia was "yielding reluctantly to worldwide pressure; the Kremlin had granted exit permits to about 125,000 Jews since 1970. No other Soviet minority has been allowed to leave in any significant numbers". Remarkable and widespread publicity however, continued to be given by U.S. media to individual Jewish dissidents.

Ironically, more and more of the Jews who were brought to the "halfway" house in Vienna, Austria, did not want to go to Israel however. "59% of those who arrived last month want to go to the U.S.. Already 10,000 have come to the U.S.. The U.S. Government has contributed \$13,000,000 for their support" said *Time*. "Moshe Decter, a Zionist and a leading U.S. specialist on Soviet Jewish affairs, characterized Israeli pressure [to get them to go to Israel] as 'stony hearted and un-Jewish'. 'Why don't these [Israeli] officials run after the 25,000 Israeli citizens who are now living in the U.S. instead of picking on a few wretched refugees trying to get a breath of fresh air in the West?'" (*Time*, Nov 22 '76).

By the Fall of 1975, Senator Jackson's outspoken attacks on Russia had helped draw Soviet-US relations once again into a tense atmosphere. The Pentagon's claim that Soviet military might had been growing very fast and that they were now at least

\* Of course Russia's refusal to allow free migration was reprehensible. What was significant here was the timing and the vehemence of the politicians.

equal if not superior to the U.S., added more fuel; Jackson strongly endorsed these fears. Media gave massive coverage to all such comments, held its own discussions, interviewed Jackson and other "hardline" Congressional Committee members, as well as Pentagon officials on this subject.\* The Pentagon then provided the most powerful argument for higher defense spendings with the announcement that with its present budget, it found it hard to meet all its expenses, and would be closing several military bases *within* the U.S.. Many thousands of jobs and small businesses depended on these bases and some of the small towns which depended heavily on the Military business protested loudly against economizing on the military budget.

The atmosphere around the country was quickly charged by now, with fears of Soviet military might, of the U.S. "giving in" to Russians, of unemployment if the Defense budget was too small. When President Ford then submitted his annual Federal budget with a Military allocation of \$114,000,000,000 for the year (which of course did not include several other additions through "pipeline" and "contingencies"), it passed Congress with only a few murmurs of protest and only marginal adjustments. The country where anti-war sentiments had been so strong until only twelve months ago, was now back to casually accepting massive defense hikes.

In the meanwhile that Christmas, a Star Was Rising In The West. As some had known for the past two years, Ronald Reagan the actor turned politician had his eye set on the White House. It was said that he had a strong constituency in the increasingly "conservative" and "America first" mood of the country. Most casual observers did not believe he would be a serious candidate, under-estimating the lure of Reagan's rabble-rousing politics. His platform was that we must be firm with foreign countries (Dollar Diplomacy) and at home, he advocated less extravagance on social programs but a lot more spent on the Military. Essentially, there was no difference between his policies and those of Ford, his fellow Republican, so Reagan suggested, modestly, that he would be better at executing these policies than Ford. The other talking point, for which he got a lot of public approval, was that he felt all of current Washington was full of intrigue and corruption. He himself was so fresh and unspoiled that he had never lived in, or held, any political post in Washington. When asked if this would not affect his ability to govern, that his lack of foreign policy experience would be a great handicap, he said no, it would not; as the past spokesman for the Screen Actors Guild, he had plenty of experience in negotiations. He would be very successful at foreign policy for this reason. His own beliefs in that area were that we should stop "giving in" to Russia, end this one-way "detente", take a strong line with foreign countries that chose to speak back and criticize America; he would never give up the Panama Canal ("to a tin-horn dictator") just because those backward people there thought they should have it back. "Personally I would tell this jerk (Gen. Torillos of Panama), we bought it, we paid for it and we are going to keep it."\*\*

\* Senator Jackson's state of Washington had extensive defense-oriented industries.

\*\* By Mid-1976 however, Reagan was making some other remarkable statements, then seeking to disclaim responsibility, or that he had been misunderstood, or insisting it was the best way. He said he would send troops to aid white rule in Rhodesia; he announced, as an example of his total commitment to Big Business, that he would give the Tennessee Valley Authority to private enterprise and abolish all controls on farmers — which drew the strongest protest from farmers themselves, now secure under government subsidy. But if his *faux pas* registered at all, it was only on a small minority of the voters. Ford's aides called him "Trigger Happy" but many millions took him seriously.



Taking a line from Moynihan (whom Reagan admired a lot) he said "Ford should stop subsidizing the U.N. instead of allowing Military bases to be closed up". His speech writers included some crisp and less-than-complimentary epitaphs about new African nations, when he spoke of them. And at home, Reagan felt the huge Washington bureaucracy had to be cut down, there was just too much power there, not enough for the State — the historical irony of this point of view, increasingly now that of Op-Con Republicans, was that it was Jefferson who had warned against too much power at the center, and Hamilton, the idol and spiritual fore-runner of so much of the Op-Con element, who fought and obtained a strong centralized Government system.

Reagan was, of course, more than anyone, for a strong free Big Business and Military. He had the best image merchants, speechwriters and advisers money could buy. With his bottle-red hair and movie actor smile, he increasingly ate into Ford's support. Ford, frightened into concessions, made one that no one ever really understood or attempted to explain. While he repeatedly asked what "concessions" were being made to Russia that Reagan and Jackson referred to, and got no clear answer, he was afraid that the majority of the voters would not reason into the strong sentiments against "giving in" or making concessions to Russia. Presuming that it was the foreignness of the word that aroused suspicion among people, Ford declared that he would, as of now, delete the word "detente" from his vocabulary. It was such moves, plus his lack of surefootedness and his lack-lustre personality that continued to eat away at his support, compared as it was to Reagan's practiced histrionics.

Ford knew that the depressing economic forecasts would hurt him greatly; the continuing exposés by the wretched Liberals in the Senate, investigating the Secret Services, would do so, too. Through 1975, Big Business had methodically cut down on employment, even executive staff. There was nervousness with the economy, but it also helped to reduce overheads anyway. With the constant reference in media to a possible depression, now a daily subject in the news, employees were terrified. In such a milieu, reducing their staff, clerical, blue collar and even the no-overtime executive cadre, the remaining staff would work to the bone, to avoid the axe. Overall, it made for a lot of saving, at least on a short-term basis. When absolutely necessary, employment could always be increased again. Ford aides worked on Big Business friends however, to show some optimistic trends. Most Big Business leaders were very much behind Ford's candidacy — they did not believe that Reagan could work the miracle of national support, at least not yet.

More bad news was reaching the public through the Liberal political reformers. The Senate investigations into the activities of the Central Intelligence Agency were revealing more than most Senators wanted. The organisation, started as the OSS spy bureau during World War 2, had grown through the Cold War to enormous dimensions, hidden in details of course from public and even congressional knowledge, because of the secrecy of its operations. In 1975, the CIA was a multi-billion dollar operation, with many millions available for supporting parties of choice in foreign Governments, and its Office of Planning Co-ordination ("dirty tricks") had a network across the globe, with personnel in the hundreds of thousands, and expenditure equal to the national budget of a medium size nation. The CIA had \$30,000,000 in investment in the U.S. alone for covert operations and had conducted 900 major operations overseas from 1961 onwards.

Now, among other things, the Senate Subcommittee hearings revealed that within the U.S. itself, the CIA (contrary to legal authority) along with Army Intelligence, FBI, etc. had opened an estimated 380,000 private letters of U.S. citizens;



from these and from "black bag break-ins" telephone tapings, etc., a list of 1,500,000 names of Americans were on file (including several elected officials such as Senator Adlai Stevenson III). The Senate Committee's investigation unearthed several assassination attempts against foreign heads of state, some direct, some through paid intermediaries.

CIA Director Colby, now nervously made some honest disclosures — not too many, but enough to make President Ford so nervous that he fired the CIA chief for his frankness. The details as well as the "successes" of the various assassination and revolution-stirring operations were quickly made "confidential" and "classified" by a nervous Senate Committee; revelations that there was at least one CIA operative on the American Embassy staff at most major capitals, provoked a strong action from some of the host countries. Many lists of CIA agents in U.S. embassies soon began to be published. Then one CIA agent in Italy, whose name had been revealed, was killed. Of course, the mood of the nation and that of the Senate investigators changed very quickly after that.

In a similar investigation by the Senate Committee related to the FBI, it was found that the FBI indulged in irresponsible extremes almost as much as the CIA. William Sullivan, former Deputy Director of FBI for ten years, told the Committee "Never once did I hear anybody, including myself, raise the question: is this course of action... lawful, legal, is it ethical or moral? We never gave thought to this line of reasoning."\*

One fact was disclosed, during these Senate hearings then quickly hushed up. Journalists were apparently often used by the CIA for gathering information, as were some missionaries. Names of journalists were withheld but some top names were bandied about. In what seemed like extreme defensiveness, white-haired "liberal" TV commentators and print journalists came out defending such acts as patriotic; such help to the CIA especially in the unpredictable Third World had helped the U.S., they said. And soon, as if to prove the point, TV commentators were castigating the primitive underdeveloped countries for their show of force in passing resolutions in the U.N. in spite of the opposition of the U.S. and quite often, the opposition of most NATO countries.

The Senate Select Committee Report, published May 1976, contained only some details of the findings. "At the urgent request of the CIA, some 200 pages of material on secret overseas operations were deleted... the Committee did get across (that) the CIA conducted some 900 *major* covert operations overseas" (*Time Magazine* May 10 '76).

The revised CIA annual budget was also at CIA request, *not* disclosed. Estimates varied from \$10,000,000,000 to \$30,000,000,000 a year. Despite the censorship of the findings and the relatively minor reforms such as, a regulations requiring that the CIA operations hereafter must be supervised, some Senators, (e.g. Barry Goldwater) refused to sign the report.\*\*

\* Sullivan was soon to write a book about the FBI and add further shocking facts to the egomania illegalities and extremism that was now being revealed by many about J. Edgar Hoover, until recently perhaps the most admired "legendary" figure in the U.S. of the twentieth century.

\*\* That reform measure, in any case, was not to last very long. Under Carter, it was implemented and more controls established over the CIA; Reagan however, was to change all that and more: Reagan's rule now made it illegal for any American citizen to disclose any CIA secret he knew about, *even if true*.

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The mood against the U.N. in America had been steadily rebellious with its increasingly pro-Arab resolutions. Four times in a year Egypt had asked the Security Council to take action to stop the growing new Israeli settlements on the occupied West Bank and of the brutal treatment of the 110,000 Arabs in it. But U.S. veto power made a resolution impossible. In the U.S. active moves were under way now, reinforced with criticism on TV against the UN, to cut off America's contributions, or to substantially reduce them.

TV commentators talked often about U.S. anger with the U.N. after the erratic "Zionism is racism" vote. Soon the man in the street was reflecting what he heard on T.V. "We ought to get out of the U.N. Who wants to have a bunch of so-called developing nations try to climb all over us?" said one TV commentator. T.V. commentators discussed the lack of co-operation of the backward, starving Third World countries, and the ingratitude, after all that America had been doing for them. Middle America listened and agreed.

In mid June, 1976 the Senate passed, after many months of discussion, the most recent Foreign Aids Bill. Of the total \$9.4 Billions, nearly half was earmarked for Israel. Zaire, the new African nation, was to have \$50 million military purchase credit. On June 17, 1976, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reported that there was a 60% increase in the value of arms moved to the Third World countries. It said the arms race has now become global. The total arms worldwide expenditure for 1975 was estimated at nearly \$300,000,000,000.

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Media soon announced that the economy was past the "recession" panic though still sick (it was election year). A budget deficit of as much as \$100,000,000,000 had been anticipated; Ford had now set about vetoing spendings on Federal programs — on Education, Health, Research, Welfare. To counter this and to emphasize his "good guy" image, however, he launched a \$135,000,000 national "swine flu" vaccine inoculation campaign. He himself got inoculated on TV and urged that all Americans should be too, against the flu epidemic that some authorities had forecast. From schools to corporations to suburban community groups, the flu vaccine had been administered under the urging of the Administration. It was a disastrous campaign. No flu epidemic came; but there were many tragic effects from poorly tested vaccine, even paralysis and deaths. Public awareness of all this was not to impair the Presidential contest, however, since it all became known the following year.\*

Big Business allies were more than willing to help Ford, as they had helped Nixon, before the election time. One measure was to show "confidence" in the Administration, especially before the next State of the Union message in January 1976. And so the dawn of 1976 was to herald a record leap in the Stock Market which

\* It was later revealed that pharmaceutical companies from the start had refused to take responsibility for the vaccine; so the Ford Govt. absolved them from it; insurance companies had also refused responsibility. And so, there were reportedly 25 fulltime lawyers defending the US Government in the following years against victims of the flu vaccine who were now suing for substantial damages.

continued for over a week. Media economists did not have a clear explanation for the record-breaking rise, except that it seemed to reflect "optimism" in Government policies.

But inflation and unemployment could not be completely controlled at will. The inflationary spiral set in acceleration in the Nixon regime had only one way to go — up; and individual or even group of business magnates could not hold it down without seriously affecting their own interests, except intermittently, and only marginally, to create "Confidence in the Administration" at a satisfactory level among the public.

Unemployment (and unemployment payments by the government) was soon to reach dangerous levels. In fiscal 1974/75, 10.2 million unemployed Americans received unemployment checks. In August 1976 alone, 7.5 million more Americans were registered as out of work (this of course did not include those who had not registered or those who had given up looking for work). Total unemployment payments in fiscal 1974/75 had been \$5,600,000,000. In fiscal 1975/76 they were to be \$18,300,000,000. In 21 states, unemployment funds had dried up, and \$3,100,000,000 had to be borrowed from the Federal Government. There was believed to be fraud but it was said that it constituted about 2.5% of the total. The state of the economy was not, of course, wholly from Ford's own policies. He had inherited the trend that Nixon had set, along with the massive inflation following the oil price hikes and the "recession" that had come about. Ford's own policies had been no more than doing whatever Nixon had done or would have done had he not had to resign.

But while media told the nation how terrible the economy was, for Big Business the sun was really shining again. Net profits had never been as good. The "me first" mood of the public allowed for concessions to Big Business. With the "recession" panic, the public was generally no longer as keen on consumer rights as it had started to be. As long as one held one's job, it did not matter how much others made, or how they made it. Even those who were critical of inflation, as it ate into the family budget were equally critical if any move was made against the industry *they* drew their paychecks from. Voters, when aware of who their Congressmen were and how they voted, were wont to question their performance principally on how well the Congressman had looked directly after the interests of his own constituency. Blacks wanted nothing more than to see how politicians helped blacks. Women fought to get "equal rights" amendment (ERA) candidates elected or re-elected; "Right To Life" groups wanted politicians who were against abortion and it did not really matter what they were for or against in other matters. Power Cartel lobbying of course was more powerful, more concentrated on self-interest than ever before and, in the current public mood, apparently acceptable. "Lobbyists don't care if you vote for World War 3 if you will vote for his issue" Congressman Colby was reported to have said.

In the meanwhile, though public support for consumer interests was on the wane it still had not totally vanished. The Federal Trade Commission and the Federal Communications Commission, both government bodies with power over product development and advertising, had some consumer-oriented personnel now, and were still concerned with the pressures of the committed consumer advocates. In Europe, too, U.S. Big Business faced some problems, in its vast operations of over \$25,000,000,000 a year. The Common Market trust-busters were after some of the giant U.S. combines, including Kodak (price fixing), Pittsburg Corning (wide price variations), Commercial Solvent Corporation of New York (pressure tactics), IBM (monopolistic) and so on.



In the U.S. while no longer enjoying major public backing, the consumer advocates were still hard at work. After intense and lengthy battles over the lobbyists of the pharmaceutical industry and the American Medical Association, the ban on price advertising of prescription drugs, and the use of generic drugs rather than brands prescribed by physicians, had been finally lifted. Rates for prescriptions varied greatly between drug stores, and with the permission to use generic drugs (with the doctor's permission), enabled the public — especially the elderly — to have great savings. The U.S. continued, however, to be the only one of the industrialized nations without any national health scheme.

"Fair trade" restrictions, which allowed price fixing by the major brands, had now also been lifted in some categories so that prices could become more competitive. Curiously the large corporations who had insisted on maintaining the price fixing "fair trade" stipulations (retail price could not be less than what the manufacturer said), were usually the same ones who otherwise fought bitterly for "free enterprise". Now, in some categories, such as the \$2,000,000,000 a year "contact lens" business, prices had varied by as much as 100% from one state to another; in stereo and other electronic equipment, a difference in price could easily be more than 50% between a state where price had to be fixed, versus another where discounting was permitted. The FTC called the ban on retail advertising on eyeglasses prices, "monopolistic", and that it cost consumers as estimated \$400,000,000 more because of wild price variations and mark up.

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In Big Business advertising, the newly created provisions, such as Claim Substantiation Studies (requiring advertisers to have independent consumer studies to show that advertising claims were accurate) had to be enforced now and FTC action against blatant and/or deliberate misrepresentation, were not very frequent but they did occur. Listerine, for instance, which Warner Lambert had advertised since 1921 as curing or being helpful in curing sore throats and colds were now asked not to make the claim because studies showed it could not be proven. Analgesic advertising — as always fiercely competitive — did not however come in for much scrutiny despite vague yet bald claims of superiority with massive advertising by one over the other. Americans consumed over 1,000,000 analgesic pills a day and for years insidious superiority was claimed. One claimed it had "an ingredient not found in others", another said it worked faster without causing stomach disorders that a competitor was said to cause. Yet another claimed to act faster, to go straight "to the nerve centres". One aspirin product soon claimed (with the aid of a male model dressed like a reporter, filmed in front of Capitol Hill) that a recent Government study had shown it was the best remedy and was wholly safe. The FTC moved against this one because the Government study was being misquoted, but it allowed the Corporation another three months to prepare an alternative campaign. The three months were used to deluge the air waves with the campaign; then the replacement campaign began. It showed the *same* male model in the *same* "reporter" trench coat, *again* in front of Capitol Hill. The words used now seemed what they were intended to sound like: a second stage of the campaign. To the average viewer it no doubt seemed as if, having registered its original message of the Federal study, the new campaign was now speaking of other selling points only as a reinforcement, not a correction.

Yet another analgesic TV campaign had a leading TV and movie star with an established image of "with it" honesty, looking the viewers straight in the eye and telling them "in a large study in a major hospital at a leading University, (Brand) was tested for pains *other than headache*. Doctors found that (Brand) works better than aspirin. That's right, doctors found that (Brand) works better than aspirin. So the next time you have a headache take (Brand)." The blatant illogic of arguing the superiority of a product for *headaches*, when the study was for pains *other than headache*, was taken care of (for those who may notice), by having the celebrated actor suddenly mumble the words "other than headache" softly. It may have been the FTC or some other complainant who caused the commercial to be revised a few months later; instead of "Next time you have a headache," the actor (David Jensen) now said "Next time you have pain ...."\*

Questionable tactics continued to be used in various advertising categories. Artificial coloring and foam were added to food and beverage campaigns as always; some clever gimmicks, which can be considered legitimate, worked. The clever tag-line of "Strongest Tide in detergent history" used for some time, was merely claiming to be better than previous Tide compositions but suggested much more without really breaking any rules; on the other hand, a car manufacturer claiming to have a domestic car of a medium price range equal in performance to a top foreign car, did not add that for the test, the domestic car had been "loaded" with extra equipment — hardly ethical. A toothpaste with fluoride overcame its requirement of back-up research by cleverly (and *legitimately*) suggesting in the commercial between two adults that if a child liked the taste of this new fluoride toothpaste, he *might* brush longer. On the other hand, the leading fluoride toothpaste, had bombarded the nation with its campaign for years to prove its superiority as a fluoride toothpaste — even though the "test" consisted not in testing this brand against another fluoride brand, but against the same brand *without* fluoride (i.e. with less than what it marketed).

The new social mood of the country had resulted in some brands — with heavy black usage or potential black usage — to have heavy emotional appeal towards a de-racialized society. There were some campaigns that clearly relied more on the massive budgets and frequency than on effective copy strategy and apparently just the advertising frequency achieved results. In one laxative product campaign, for instance, a black woman comes to a mobile lending library to read up on biology. "Why?" asks the friendly white female librarian. "It's Bill" says the black woman. "Bill?" (registering great concern and thereby also establishing that she, a white woman, knew the black family intimately). Bill, it turns out, has "irregularity". The librarian says its not necessary to read up on biology for this, she knows about (Brand) the right laxative.

In another commercial of this intriguing campaign, a black mother asks her teenager daughter to go and buy her that brand of laxative. The daughter (who, for some reason always seems to give fleeting glances at someone, presumably the director) chides the mother for using the old fashioned stuff. The mother gives her all the good reasons. And the daughter (with her eyes still scanning off-camera) leans over her mother and says "Well, momma knows best".

That "Momma" or "Dad" knows best was a theme, at least implied in many of

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\* Among the Reagan Administration's early acts in 1981 was to instruct the Federal Communication Commission to reduce, then end its "interference" in Big Business advertising and commercial broadcasting supervision of "fair practices". Let the buyer look after himself, they said.

the "Slice of Life" campaigns by the big advertisers for white consumers too. It helped, in more ways than one, in bringing the kids back into the fold. In the "Slice of Life" commercials of the household product giants, the message was "mom/father knows best" message after a jocular quip with mild ridicule in the "now" youth language and attitudes of kids; or with the "liberated" woman glorified (but not *too* liberated). On the appeal of "tradition" e.g. "in our family we learn from one generation to the next... about everything", permitted reinforcement of "conservative" ideas. A leading coffee manufacturer swamped the air waves soon with "if something works you stick with it" (a phrase used by Big Business to say "don't mess around with new regulations") and a cosmetic manufacturer was now ready to pun for "the right to bare (bear) arms".

Major advertisers, especially those whose operations were known to be heavy polluters, had continuing campaigns passionately favoring the preserving of nature, ecology. Ecology for a while was to create many new marketing and copy phrases (or more correctly, "eco-pornography") e.g. "ecology psychology" (cosmetics), "eye ecology" (eye lashes), "fashion ecology" (dresses). Oil companies and nuclear energy producers provided some very beautiful countryside scenes.

Banks and loan institutions, in recent years advertised heavily, offering a variety of "gifts" (from hot-water bottles to kitchen equipment) in return for deposits for fixed periods. Again in the post-Watergate panic, new laws had caused these institutions to advertise that they charged severe penalties for early withdrawals. Also under the new law, the actual amount of interest on loans had to be clearly made known to borrowers (this could be 18% for a bank and as much as 30% for a finance institution). The heavily emotional advertising — which intensified greatly towards Christmas each year — appeared to offer customers to come and simply take the money away in sackfuls. Many did — and paid later. In the past six years, 100,000 Americans had been declared insolvent. Several million had their "instalment purchase" items repossessed because they missed payments at some stage. Since 1950, the U.S. population had increased by 44%, but the total consumer installment debt had grown 1,200%. It was \$179,000,000,000 and that did *not* include the massive loans the public took to finance their houses. Their \$179 billion borrowing was mainly to buy cars, and home furnishings.\*

Now that the "Conservative" trend was on, and advertising was not under scorn, as it had been for a few years, movie stars in large numbers were agreeable to once again endorse products. Even hallowed names from British stage and screen fell for the lure of the big money offered, now frequently as much as \$1,000,000 for a campaign. Faded stars (no doubt paid less) were content to sell carpets, automobile repair shops, "fruit pies and ho hums" and peanut butter.

Regimen and mechanized advertising processing sometimes created foolish marketing errors. A leading coffee advertiser had a famous actress say that the one thing her husband was really particular about was good coffee, and that he might divorce her if she failed in this — a sentiment rather foolishly expressed in a time when the most docile housewife was resentful of being considered a household slave.

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\* The urge to buy on installment credit and through bank loans was made into a frenzy through the bombardment of advertising, but the first step towards forming the habit was made almost mandatory. An individual's "Credit Rating" determined his or her financial status, not how much money they had in the bank or in investments. And you did *not* get Credit Rating until you had bought at least one major item on installment, and paid it by installments, *even* if you had the money and could pay in full.



Another major advertiser (for a tonic) had the husband say, "I think I'll keep her" about his wife (the campaign was quickly changed, no doubt after delayed audience research).

Yet another major advertiser got carried away with "tradition" to show an old-time travelling salesman-cum-medicine man, selling a modern pharmaceutical product like the proverbial snake oil — hardly the assurance to inspire confidence, despite the "good old days" appeal ... Eye of newt, toe of frog, wool of bat and tongue of dog — at least one top Chicago-headquartered advertising agency had now sold participation to many clients in its Magic Formula developed through a Computer system — that of assembling all the various elements of all successful campaigns of all categories and developing therefrom through the computer the "right elements" for each product advertising. Thankfully it did not always work.

Hard sell "special offers" which usually annoyed through junk mail were now making their "astounding offers" via the electronic medium in large numbers. A growing number of "direct mail" houses sprang up and now spent \$2,000,000,000 on T.V. alone.

Ideas that made the audience laugh at the advertisers (VW cars had been among the first to use it) continued to work well provided the budget was large enough to bombard them with heavy frequency. A nautical man in a toilet bowl sold toilet bowl cleaners; housewives left homes to go squeeze toilet paper in supermarkets.

Sex worked. Airlines vied with each other to sell the sex appeal of air stewardesses. One had a stewardess "fly me" campaign, other had her promise to "work my tail off" for passengers. A "take it off" campaign for a shaving cream launched a model not only into big time but a highly profitable health food business.

Bra and girdle campaigns promised women that they could draw great attention even though in fact they were misshapen. Bras in particular promised that everyone would be deceived — except, presumably the mate "for a figure they can't help noticing." In one of the dozens of such commercials a man in the office corridor sees a female colleague. Presumably he sees her every day but this time he does a double-take, in disbelief. "Jane?" (or it may have some other name) he asks in astonishment. The reason? She is wearing a bra that "lifts and separates". Should one expect an office worker to recognize a female colleague by her face? Of course not. And yet, backed by a massive advertising budget, it is not unlikely that this campaign was found to create the right subconscious emphasis for the selling of its bra.

Advertising by Big Business in 1975 was to reach a total of \$28,000,000,000 in major media advertising. The nation's ten largest advertisers spent \$13,880,000,000 up to 95.1% of network TV advertising.

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Reagan was soon turning his attention on the surprisingly successful Democratic candidate for President: Jimmy Carter, former Governor of Georgia. Carter had soon eclipsed the better-known candidates; the very liberal candidates like Senator Fred Harris had of course quickly fallen by the wayside due to lack of funds. Carter, who had started as an unknown, had a lot of appeal in both his apparent intelligence, his moderate-liberal views combined with a strong business sense — he had built the family peanut business into a multi-million dollar operation. But essentially, Carter

appealed to what was the submerged, yet alive, feeling in Americans of something decent, genuinely moral and principled.

Reagan had two 30 minute nationwide TV shows in which he attacked Carter for his "soothing rhetoric, pleasant smiles and reorganization gimmicks" which he said could not solve the nation's problems. This it must be remembered, was Ronald Reagan, the actor, speaking; he then proceeded on his regular campaign trail in which free media coverage was considerable; he wore (and was photographed in) a variety of Cowboy and Southern hats, at ranches, barbecues, at raffles and with his profile pictured against the Western mountains and skies, on horseback.

The Cowboy politicians were the most powerful addition — as an entity — to the Power Cartel. Many had been part of the Power Cartel before in other capacities but now their force was to use both money and power to bring the country to the extreme right.

Ford still led Reagan for the Republican nomination but it was a very uncomfortable, narrow lead, even though Ford received considerable friendly free publicity from media too. Aside from political alignment, people found Ford a "likeable guy" whose limited intelligence posed no threat to others. To get along, Ford was an ardent supporter of Big Business freedom and the Zionists. Importantly Ford and his family, like Reagan, had close attachments and aspirations in media. Reagan's wife was a former actress, as was his daughter and former wife. Ford himself had been a model; Ford's wife was a former dancer, and with a considerable following among the public through her appealing personality and apparent frank mannerism. Ford's daughter Susan, was pretty, very keen on a photojournalistic career with media and a favorite of TV networks.\* Ford was, immediately after leaving the White House, to sign up as advertising spokesman for a silver jewellery company, also to sign a contract with NBC to provide "expert" commentary from time to time, and later even to have a Japanese TV contract.

But back in August 1976, as Ford scrambled to get the necessary delegate commitments, the Ford group clearly panicked, showing signs that Ford (perhaps from his football background) could play very rough to win. In August, prior to the conventions, Mississippi State Republican Chairman Reed accused the Ford campaigners of "high pressure tactics and lies"; in one case he said they called a delegate and said, "If you don't sign up (for Ford) by 9 a.m. you won't be a federal judge". Reed warned that the Mississippi delegates were for Ford over Reagan anyway but could get angry and go against him (from the pressure tactics).

The Republican convention, held in Kansas City, was, to quote an impressed *Time Magazine* reporter (Aug 30 '76) "a helleva convention ... for fully 14 minutes, the long plastic horns wailed and moaned in an earpounding salute to a doomed candidacy [of Reagan] ... Ronald Reagan's snake dancing, banner-waving bandwagon gave vent to their frustrations.... They [all delegates] hurled confetti, tossed frisbees, bounced multi colored beach balls ... it was one of the liveliest, noisiest of political conventions". Ford as the nominee made a strong speech. Without a blush he

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\* Prior to her marriage to a former White House body guard, Susan was to appear on several TV shows as guest in the next two years to boost her father for the 1980 Presidential election. In the shortlived *Jim Nabors Show*, she was co-host. In one 1978 segment, she, Nabors and Sonny Bono spent so much time boosting Gerald Ford that one would have thought the entire show to have been a politically paid broadcast.

proclaimed, "From August of 1974 to August of 1975, the records show steady progress towards prosperity, peace and public trust."

For a change, the Democratic Convention was far more sedate and predictable. Jimmy Carter had clearly won through with enough support from the primaries. Relatively minor differences (except for Eugene McCarthy) were ironed out and Carter was the Democratic nominee.

Now began the standard confrontation between Democratic vs Republican candidates. Carter was ahead in the polls, but Ford was making gains. Carter faced more than one problem. Senator Eugene McCarthy, the anti-war candidate of 1968 had elected to run as an Independent candidate. His following, even among the 1960s youth, was not as much as it had been. McCarthy's motives were unclear; he said he wished to make a point, even though he was not at all likely to win. But what Democrats and Liberals feared most was that McCarthy would draw an unnecessary amount of Carter support and thereby create problems. McCarthy, whether he intended to or not, was once again "The Spoiler". In some critical ways, his refusal to support Humphrey in 1968 until the very end, had allowed Nixon to win; now, it seemed he might take enough Carter support away to allow Ford to win. There were reports that delighted Big Business and Conservative Republicans were pouring money into the McCarthy campaign, to help "the Spoiler".

But Carter had even more worrisome problems: media. For more than one reason media was clearly attempting to either raise doubts about the Georgian or to ridicule him. And when media did this often enough, vast segments of America followed suit.

There were two main reasons for major media's discomfort with Carter; one was that the Zionist lobby was unsure and a little worried about his attitudes.\* "Jewish radar sets are up all over, sensing a new political configuration" said Chicago financial magnate and Jewish leader Maynard Wishner. Carter was a devout Christian and from the South. By the standard delineations, therefore, he should have been something of an extremist for "Judeo-Christian ethics" (which meant unbounded support for Israel); but while he claimed often enough that the U.S. was committed to the security of Israel, there was something about his moral convictions that was not the same as previous Presidents or the other leading candidates. He appeared to have deep moral convictions, an almost fundamental obsession with right and wrong. His principles seemed real, sincere. He seemed like a "Jesus" Christian rather than a "born again" Christian. The difference could mean a lot. Past Presidents including some like Dwight Eisenhower who, while they proclaimed themselves with the necessary fervor as Christians, had become church goers only after becoming President. Nixon had had several devout evangelist friends. The wellknown evangelist Billy Graham, for instance, had been such a close friend of Nixon, that he had even helped in the selection of Spiro Agnew as Vice-President. But Graham (like another ardent Nixonite, John McLoughlin, the priest who loved extravagant living and who had later left the Jesuit order) were the familiar evangelists — friends of the Judeo-Christian institution; some of them proclaimed the Jewish rights to Judea-Samaria with almost the same fervor as many Zionist did. The National Alliance of Christians and Jews was heavily supported by such men. They were also clearly pragmatists, and good friends of Big Business.

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\* It should be noted that the Zionist leadership were reluctant allies of the Op-Con extremists overtures — they know of the anti-Semetics in that Camp, and historically the Zionists had received more powerful support from the Democrats. And many Jewish voters were still liberal Democrats.



Carter could be the same — or *made* to act the same with political force, but he might be different. He was not close to such evangelists — aside from Mrs. Stapleton, his sister, but she too was a different type of evangelist, who seemed to choose to help reform or help not the rich and important, but the decadent, just as Jesus had sought out the prostitute and the thieves. Carter's mother had been a Peace Corps volunteer and seemed also to have — or at least express — humanitarian principles.

Carter made the right statements about Israel. The loss of Jewish support that McGovern had suffered was fair warning but Carter, also seemed a man of independent moral convictions. Could such a man be expected to side with all that Israel and the Zionist lobby now did and wanted done? There was no certainty. His brand of deep moral convictions and independent thinking was unusual in politics. It was confusing. Media transferred their confusion to Carter. *Carter was confusing, uncertain.*

Media and Big Business were also wary of this candidate, for another reason. Though clearly a man who believed and was expert at business himself, who had made millions in it, Carter's morality and his proclamations about the shameful tax loopholes, the plight of the poor and the minorities, the underprivileged was somehow *not* standard rhetoric. His attitude towards blacks was not standard either, for a white Southern Baptist. His record showed he had genuinely fought for the black minority in Georgia and had friends among blacks.

Carter, the expert Businessman-millionaire, the White Southern Baptist, did not seem to be the standard type. He was *confusing*. Also, on a personal level, it was vaguely discomfiting, irritating. *He had to be playing a role.* Clearly he wanted to be President and could be quite pragmatic on the way this could be achieved. Could one rely on him to allow that desire to be a popular President overcome his moral concerns?

And so, even while many in media saw and were impressed with his credentials and sincerity, increasingly there were questions raised alongside. Soon slick and cynical comments grew. The Carter smile became one of the typical subjects to build viewer and reader interest and to indulge in the slick and cynical comments that voters had now grown to enjoy so much more than the real issues. The Carter Smile drew TV commentators and print journalists and cartoonists like a magnet for selling media on a day-to-day basis. It was too broad a smile, he smiled too much; to the voters it was a simple enough argument: mistrust a man who smiles so broadly. Soon the inexperienced Carter found himself so conscious that *he tried to reduce his natural smile.*

Eventually, the Carter contingent found that it was not the right policy so Carter was allowed to smile like he naturally did, but he attempted also not to smile as often as he had. The conscious self-restraint was to be clearly apparent in the later Carter-Ford TV debates. Carter then gave an interview to *Playboy* magazine — another example of independent thinking by a man who clearly felt his moral convictions did not require the standard hypocritical constraints. Moreover, in that interview, he said that he had “lust in his heart” at least on occasions for some women. That drew a national furore and ridiculing comments from media. Carter had made a bad blunder and would lose a lot of support, some said. How could a presidential candidate claim to be so moral, yet give an interview to *Playboy* and confess in it to becoming sexually attracted to women other than his wife, even if he asserted that his moral convictions never let him do anything about it? Carter himself became defensive and explained on more than one occasion that he saw nothing wrong in being honest, that this was how human nature was and he felt it would be hypocritical

to claim to be sinless in mind. Yet more questions were raised in media. Could such a man, who could make such "blunders" by not recognizing "the pulse of the people" be a good President? Polls showed Carter had lost a good deal of support from the *Playboy* incident.

Ford faced problems of his own; in many ways being the incumbent President had great advantages, especially with Big Business clearly on one's side. But despite the various moves that the presidency allowed him, including the signing of bills for just the right popular reasons, to get "official" coverage on TV as often as he wished, Ford found that inflation was now beyond the grasp of his Big Business allies and each month produced worse news. Also, unfortunate problems could arise where some member of the federal government could say something extremely foolish and cause the President valuable support. Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz had done that with his ill-timed jokes against blacks and had to be quickly removed from office. CIA Chief Colby had been too frank about CIA activities at the Senate hearings, and Ford had fired him (Colby himself admitted he was fired). Now of all people, a top Military man, outspoken though everyone knew he was, had made blasphemous comments about Israel in a King Features interview. General George Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (not to be confused with Defense Secretary Brown, who was Jewish) was quoted as having said that Israel was a burden on the U.S. and Britain. What was worse, the comments in that, as yet, unpublished interview had leaked out to Israeli sources and U.S. media, clearly indicating that Israel's own preference for Ford over Carter may be weakened by such a statement. Also U.S. media's anger was clear, from the strong comments by TV commentators and Jewish leaders. Some such as *Time Magazine* did make it clear that the errant General had made such terrible statements before (at least alleviating Ford's own direct responsibility for statements made before he took the presidency). *Time* (Oct. 25 '76) said "The General got into trouble before when he *ignorantly* suggested that Jews control American banks and newspapers and thus exert an undue influence on [U.S.] Government policies" (italics added). Ford quickly denounced the statements of General Brown; some Zionist leaders and TV commentators were however not satisfied with his denunciation; they wanted more affirmative action, even a call for General Brown's removal. Ford was in a quandary. He chose instead to make his own commitment to Israel now by what even many pro-Israeli media commentators considered an extreme measure — he soon announced that Israel would be given the new M-15 fighter Jets as well as the new concussion bombs. Ford made this hurried announcement reportedly without even consulting his aides or the Pentagon; the latter's astonishment at the announcement was proof enough of that, as was their chagrin. The fact was that the U.S. itself did not have these planes and bombs in its own stockpiles. Ford now directed that Israel should get them before the U.S. did. Not to be outdone, Carter pledged full and complete support to Israel. Reports said Israel officials were plainly amused at this competition to outdo one another on behalf of Israel, especially during the TV debates in the U.S.

Carter had raised some difficult and direct challenges at Ford's performance as President. Carter had refused to take advantage (he even refused to comment) when it had been revealed that Ford's involvement with Watergate was possibly more than

\* An Editors & Publishers Survey found that 411 dailies supported Ford while 80 supported Carter. Some of the major media "traditionally" did not officially endorse one candidate.

had been known — that Ford had (according to Nixon consul John Dean's testimony) as a Congress Minority Leader (before he became VP) blocked the Banking Committee hearings on the Watergate-related illegalities. But Carter, however, did pursue Ford on income tax and campaign irregularities. *Time* (Oct 18 '76) reported Carter had asked Ford to explain income tax discrepancies. "I call upon the American people to force Ford to tell the truth" said Carter. *Time* Magazine then went on to use what was by now a standard journalistic ploy to arouse public feelings in a desired direction — through the comments of the "unnamed official" or "confidential source"; *Time* said in this case on Carter's insistence "My God, Ford is bleeding from every pore and Carter is going after his blood" moaned one reporter\* (presumably not a *Time* reporter).

Despite his massive campaign against Carter's inexperience, being "fuzzy on issues", the TV debates showed Carter not only more self assured, intelligent and knowledgeable on matters of government, but also more articulate on what he proposed to do on each issue that came up. Ford's aides had evidently tried hard to improve his speech delivery and overcame the image of a not-too-bright individual who was less than surefooted.\*\* It worked to some measure, but Carter clearly had the edge — even before Ford committed a major blunder. Well briefed though Ford had evidently been on various subjects under discussion, apparently there had been an omission in at least one relatively minor area — the status of European communist countries. Now, with his new found confidence and precise mannerism, Ford asserted that Poland enjoyed independence from Soviet Russia. Though he attempted within hours to rectify the error, he had lost at least some support from this, and perhaps what was worse for him, reinforced the concerns in some minds about his mental abilities.

Ford's campaign committee had planned a one week \$10 million dollar advertising blitz towards the end of the campaign in early November. This massive campaign was at least in part focussed at attacking Carter directly — his "inconsistency", tendency to "waffle", "distort" the truth. Ford's campaign also made some astonishing claims of achievement.

By the time of the November election, many voters had, as always, agreed with media that there was no real difference on issues between the candidates; the slick comments of readers and viewers often repeated the words of their favorite medium or media personality. These jokes were meant to show how sophisticated the public were. It was Twiddleman versus Twiddledee, it was Pet Rock (the irrepressable Nicholas Van Hoffman had coined this label for Ford) versus Cheshire Cat. Those who played this game tended to prefer Ford, because, they said, he had an edge on experience.

But somehow, through the layers of media glib, Carter had managed to reach many Americans. In him, despite the cynicism and the doubts, they saw a sincerity, a

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\* Who this "one reporter" was, *Time* did not say — it did not have to. The passage was aimed — and no doubt got — sympathy for Ford.

\*\* In Washington circles, Ford's tendency to stumble and fall and to be accident-prone was well-known. Ford shared with Nixon's other VP Spiro Agnew the unique record of having brained a spectator on the sidelines while playing golf. So frequent were Ford's lapses from the norm in this regard that jokes abounded. One, after his car accident with a private citizen, claimed that Secret Servicemen had jumped on Ford's car and wrestled it to the ground before it could do more damage. And the variation of this was that after Ford had pierced his cheek with a fork at a dinner, Secret Servicemen had wrestled the fork to the ground.



decency, that touched the sincerity, decency, in the submerged deeps of the subconscious in themselves. It was a very long time — if McGovern was forgotten, as he was — since anyone could recall simple morality being offered as a major quality for the most powerful office in the world. It touched and drew a response from many millions.

Carter won by 51% vs. Fords 48%. The rest went to Eugene McCarthy and other fringe candidates. Just 54% of America's 150 million eligible voters had bothered however, to cast their ballots, about the same as in 1972 (when 55% had). In 1976, by way of comparison, 91% had voted in West Germany and 90% in Sweden.

(x)

The President-elect was a source of considerable concern and anxiety not just to the Zionists but to the Power Cartel in general and Big Business in particular. The Jewish lobby was somewhat mollified and a little reassured with the strong support Carter had voiced for Israel in the closing stages of the campaign, even calling on Ford to force disclosure of the corporations who were respecting the Arab boycott of Jewish-owned corporations.

Big Business, however, was particularly uneasy with Carter's tax-reform views and his moralistic attitudes. Resistance to his tax views began to take shape even before he assumed office. *Time* magazine's columnist, Washington editor and Op-Con promoter Hugh Sidey in his weekly comments reported (Nov 29 '76) "Al Ullman, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee is already suggesting that his committee might have to change the Carter idea about a tax cut ... and Carter's interest in solar energy has already created ripples in that [energy] industry".

Many in Big Business — including senior media celebrities — were clearly perturbed by Carter's views on tax reform, his concerns even about tax deductability of business expenses, notably the "three-martini lunch". Carter said that if the rich could get their meals deducted from taxes, the blue-collar workers' sandwich should also have been tax deductible. He felt only 50% of a legitimate business meal should be tax deductible. As a representative of media elite, we might consider Mr. Sidey's comments as expressed in his column in *Time* — on this subject. (Mr. Sidey was also a regular on the weekly discussion TV show produced by *The Washington Post* called *Agronski & Co.*) Even while the Presidential battle had been heating up, Mr. Sidey, clearly shaken by Carter's reform proposals, did a strong provocative piece entitled "Cherishing the Right to Get Rich". "While Jimmy Carter has settled most of his indignation on getting rich unfairly — on tax loopholes and the lobbyists who preserve and enlarge them — his presidential campaign cries often have biblical overtones suggesting that the wealthy are vaguely evil. Gerald Ford, on the other hand, eagerly indulged in the resort rituals of the rich.... for 75 years this nation was possessed by what Lord Beaverbrook called 'the money brain... the supreme brain...'\* way back in 1972 when George McGovern proposed a 100% inheritance tax

\* Here is an example of the experienced, subtle and persuasive American journalist. What Mr. Sidey by this reference is really saying is "See, the British aristocracy thought so highly of our post Civil War obsession with money". What Mr. Sidey does not explain is that Lord Beaverbrook, was William Aitken, Canadian newspaper tycoon who virtually initiated yellow journalistic "sex and sensationalism" into the British market. In keeping with the trends, the mighty newspaper tycoon had then been honored with a peerage.

on all holdings over half a million dollars, the most vehement opposition came from the blue-collar workers. A bemused McGovern asked, "What do they think — that they are all going to win the State lottery?" Mr. Sidey's article featured a photograph of Gerald Ford, looking very suave in formal attire under the caption "The President: At Ease With Luxury". Mr. Sidey's article was like many others by journalists who aimed to arouse emotions and sentiments in favor of Big Business and status quo that the Right To Get Rich Was An American Right, even if so called "do-gooders" like McGovern, while professing love for the common man, made contemptuous statements (such as that recorded) and might scoff at blue-collar workers hoping one day to achieve The American Dream; just so — Mr. Sidey implied — did self-proclaimed reformers and extremists (like Carter) claim the right to judge the rich as "vaguely evil". Curiously, Mr. Sidey's article omitted to mention that Carter was a millionaire, and undoubtedly wealthier than Ford "at ease with luxury".

Nevertheless, Carter had won, with growing apprehension in some quarters, as he began to name his Cabinet. One of the first named was to be Bert Lance, a prosperous banker, a close friend, and President of National Bank of Georgia. Lance apparently had to be persuaded to leave his very lucrative business to become a salaried Director of the Office of Management, and Budget (OMB). *Time* (Dec 6 '76) in an article "An Au-Shucks banker for Jimmy" quoted Bert Lance as saying "I belong to the people's school of economics."\* Lance made everyone aware however, that while his way of doing business was informal and countryfied he was determined, having accepted the responsibility, to see that waste and corruption were stamped out of the Federal budget; that Carter had already begun to have plans for OMB, to streamline the fat out of the Federal expenditure and to revise the Federal system, in keeping with his campaign promise to reduce Federal deficits from over \$80 billion by \$20 billion each year and to have a balanced budget by the fourth year. Lance promised that he would work to see that it was done.

That there was waste and corruption had been clearly apparent for years. Even though considerable amount of the Federal spendings had been usefully employed in social schemes, over the years misuse and mismanagement had grown and with it corruption, especially with administrations wholly disinterested and almost inviting corruption.

Despite Ford's own platitudes about progress, the country's economy and its image abroad was in dangerously poor shape. And, as we have noted, total unemployment payments had grown from \$5,600,000,000 in fiscal 1974/75 to \$18,300,000,000 in 75/76.

As to the U.S. image abroad, the U.S. Information Service which had conducted opinion polls in Europe for 22 years about "overall popular esteem" for the U.S., found in July/August 1976 that in Britain favorable opinion had declined to 34% (lowest since 1954); Italy 41% (lowest ever); France 38% (lowest since 1958).\*\*

\* "Carter let it be known" added *Time* (Dec 6 '76) "that his family peanut business owed \$4.5 million to Lance's bank... the President elect has already promised that on taking office he will give up any interest in the family business".

\*\* Ford in his campaign had made the claim that U.S. prestige abroad was really high, offering as proof that the U.S. had made a sweep of the Nobel prizes that year. That drew a sharp response from Harvard Chemist George Kistiakowsky and ten other Nobel prize winners. Speaking for the group, Kistiakowsky criticized Ford for his "stinginess towards science" and his lack of concern "to encourage the growth of American science".

And, while inflation was already threatening to go again into double digits, Big Business elected to make hay in the remaining days of the Ford presidency. "Fearing that the President-elect [Carter] intended to impose wage-price guidelines after his January 20 inauguration, several big corporations raised prices...on a broad range of basic material that go into consumer goods from refrigerators to shirts" wrote *Time* magazine Dec 13, 1976. U.S. Steel, Bethlehem and Republic, the three Steel giants, raised steel prices by 6%. Alcoa and Reynolds increased price of aluminium sheets by 11%. "DuPont said it would increase the price of its Dacron polyester fiber up to 10% ... Said U.S. Steel Chairman Edgar Speer: '*The political situation is always a consideration. Let's not kid ourselves.*'" (italics added)

## (xi)

The year 1976, had of course been a memorable year for more than the routine presidential elections. It was the year which the U.S.A., counting 1776 as its first year, had scheduled for celebrations to end all previous celebrations. There had been enormous achievements in the country's short history — in size, wealth, technology, in varied and numerous inventions to make life easier, to make production faster, to reach up to the moon, no less.

The United States of America celebrated July 4, 1976 on an unprecedented scale. From the naval spectacle of 225 sailing ships in New York harbor to the settling of Space lander Viking on Mars, from the flag raising at Mars Hill, Maine to the 10.8 mile parade in Los Angeles, from mountain climbing to Mount McKinley, Alaska to 33½ tons of fireworks in Washington, America rejoiced after over a decade of many traumas, humiliations and tragedies. Historical events were replicated with all the embellishments and "artistic licence" that commercial media had inculcated into the nation. Some might call such drastic alterations of history an implied *lack* of true respect for the past, from an embarrassment in accepting reality as it was, warts and all, and learning from it. But most of the audiences and readers would perhaps favor "glorified" presentations — even if they recognized them as such — to be the right expression of patriotism.

Other nations joined in the celebrations and congratulated the USA's astounding growth. No less a celebrity than the Queen of England personally, presented a new Independence Bell in Philadelphia.

It was 1976, the Bicentennial Year. Much had been achieved, a virtual miracle, no less, in transforming a nation of poor immigrants of the lowest social strata into the most powerful and the richest nation on earth. The *idea* of freedom of the individual had been cherished and kept alive. World orders had changed out of the inspiration from the Age of Reason which had inspired the original concept of the American democracy. Some of America's greats had come to be revered around the globe.

But a new and devastating tyranny had also been let loose, in many ways far more dangerous and effective than the *tangible* tyrannies of old. Electronic communication, a magnificent achievement of a little known British inventor, had been made the tool of a band of new overlords, ruled by no motives and restraints other than self-interest. Mind Control, with the most powerful tools and the best expertise and brains that money could buy, performed its many miracles on an unsuspecting public, at home and abroad.

Where would America have been, had it been permitted to stay on the course so



fiercely and clearly articulated by the founding idealists and men of principles? With its natural treasures, mineral riches, and the hard work that Americans had been capable of, it would of course have been the richest nation even without the monopolists. But with stronger and continuous — not intermittent and weak — adherence to its founding spirit, it would have been the most prosperous *and* the most loved nation on earth; it is not inconceivable that its inspiration would have ended the archaic social inequities around the world; wealth and natural resources now wasted on war materials, controlled production of farm products and chauvinistic pursuits of various other kinds could have ended; poverty and death from starvation of the depressed millions would have easily been ended with a more equitable world order. It is not inconceivable that with all that, totalitarianism would have met its due extinction...

"The generation which commences a revolution rarely completes it" wrote Thomas Jefferson to John Adams in 1823. There were some in 1976 who felt it was not completed yet. There were a few who feared that, as things stood, it would never be.

## *Carter: The Sin Of Morality*

(i)

A new President takes office after the January 20 inauguration. In a move that both surprised and shocked many who regarded Ford's main appeal as that of a "good, decent guy," Ford had proceeded in the last few weeks of his presidency to make several moves which normally any lame-duck President would consider unethical. He announced the appointment of four new ambassadors; he asked Congress to cut individual income taxes by \$10 billion and business taxes by \$2.5 billion and to increase the Social Security tax the following year; he said he wanted to end gasoline price controls; he wanted to increase the salary of Congressmen and senior officials; he even decided (after Carter's famous pledge to grant amnesty to draft evaders among his first actions as President) to arrive at some kind of amnesty for draft dodgers and evaders. And, he suddenly proposed (without consulting the Secretary of the Interior) that Puerto Rico should be made the 51st state. Puerto Rico itself was surprised at this suggestion, and the Governor of the area (though a strong advocate of statehood) ignored Ford's new support in his own inaugural address. It was not the most gracious exit for a U.S. President, though media continued to emphasise that he was a "good, decent guy".

(ii)

Carter's inauguration signalled a major change. The simple austerity, the refusal to link grandeur with the office of the President was apparent even in the various inaugural ceremonies. And for the first time ever, a President and his First Lady, walked, not rode, from Capitol Hill to the White House after the ceremonies. The public felt reassured and warmed towards the informal new President who even in his inaugural address stressed morality — but with a difference. He seemed not to be indulging in political rhetoric but to genuinely believe what he said.

But when he said stressed fundamental morality that made many squirm. "We have learnt that 'more' is not necessarily 'better', to be true to ourselves, we must be true to others. We will not behave in foreign places so as to violate our rules and standards here at home, for we know that this trust which our nation earns is essential to our strength. Because we are free we can never be indifferent to the fate of freedom elsewhere." It sounded very much like Jefferson's "I know but one code of morality for men whether acting singly or collectively". To many Washingtonians and the media,

the absence of what had by now become a 'tradition', the pomp, stature and royalty in the Presidency was disconcerting and even annoying. A disinterest in status and pomp in a President caused all those who had striven so hard to make their way up the social ladder — including those of the media — to feel somehow cheated. From the purely business standpoint, media stood to lose a great deal if the trimmings and the glamor of the presidency were too curtailed. Audiences (and readers) were held by such glamor and trimmings. Media was soon into scoffing the Southern contingent, with wry and cynical remarks about Carter's moral obsession. It felt safe in doing that. A President who was liable to attack by fair and unfair means was to be feared. One who was ruled by moral qualms, however, could be taken advantage of.

As he had promised, within 24 hours of his taking office, Carter issued a pardon to Vietnam draft evaders estimated to total about 15,000. The pardon did not cover those who had used "violence". Reactions were predictably mixed. Liberals such as Senator Edward Kennedy applauded the move; Senator Barry Goldwater called it "the most disgraceful thing that a President has ever done" (presumably including all the Nixon deeds in this judgement). Many of the conservatives agreed with Goldwater.

Carter's proposals on energy, inflation, unemployment, tax reform began to emerge fast. Media voiced astonishment that a new President and his aides would have worked so hard and to have so many comprehensive plans ready so soon after inauguration. Congress itself, having these massive reform plans to deal with, was appalled at the amount of work that it must now do.

Carter wanted to streamline the federal government, reduce the fat and the waste out of the bureaucracy. He also planned to cut the White House Staff by 30%. There was to be no Chief of Staff, but in pursuance of the importance he placed on energy, he had created a new Cabinet level position of Secretary of Energy.

Carter's nominations for his Cabinet ran into problems with Congress. Already the Power Cartel recognized in the farmer from Georgia, himself a member of the Trilateral (Big Business) Conference, problems that may occur if his morality superseded his pragmatism. From past experience of the use and misuse of presidential powers, the Congress was eager to assert itself. While Carter's nomination of Bell for Attorney General came in for some serious questioning by liberals, who felt his past civil rights record was not that wholesome, Carter's nomination of Jack Kennedy's guide, philosopher and friend Theodore Sorenson for the post of Director of CIA came in for severe criticism from the Op-Cons and the military. Sorenson was an intellectual, a liberal, an "ascetic" individual. The Intelligence Committee (Senator Goldwater and Sam Thurmon among others) asked why Schlesinger had not been named for the post (Schlesinger was a Republican, a former Defense Secretary under Nixon and Ford and former CIA Chief). Sorenson was sent to meet with and reassure the Senators. Goldwater refused to see him. At the hearing of his nomination in the Senate Caucus Room in Jan. 1977, Sorenson made a surprise "rebuttal" to "scurrilous and personal attacks" against him. "It is now clear that a substantial portion of the U.S. Senate and the Intelligence community is not yet ready to accept as Director of the Central Intelligence an *outsider* who believes as I believe". Sorenson went on to withdraw his nomination.

It was the first time in 25 years that a Congress with the same party majority as the President, had, in effect, rejected a Presidential nominee for his Cabinet. Sorenson later told *Time* Magazine (Jan 24 '77) he had been advised "a lot of dirty little streams flowed together to make this flood". Leading newspapers, such as *The*



*New York Times*, did not even print his speech to the Senators. Carter, eager to avoid major confrontations with Congress, had been reportedly willing to let the Sorenson nomination be withdrawn; for similar reasons he was willing to accept the Power Cartel's recommended James Schlesinger, former CIA Chief and Defense Secretary, to a post in his Cabinet. And so while he nominated Turner for the CIA position, he took Schlesinger for the new Cabinet position he now created to emphasize the critical importance of an energy policy, Secretary of Energy. Carter's nomination of Paul Wernke for Salt II discussions, met with strong attack from Senator Jackson's group; reports were prepared to show that Wernke was for reduction of arms, against nuclear weapons, and critical of the arms race. Wernke however managed to convince the Senators he would be suitably hostile to the Russians and sympathetic to arms escalation.

Carter's economy plan was already having trouble in Congress — and in media. The tax rebate of \$50 was being revised by all and sundry in Congress — though most agreed that the sluggish economy needed that boost very much. The national growth rate in the last three months of 1976 had been only 3%, the lowest increase since recovery began in 1975. Unemployment stood at 7.8%. Carter's plan offered incentives to business to increase employment; he wanted also to increase public works and job creating programs and this met with criticism from both sides — Labor Union leader Meany felt it was not enough (Meany wanted \$50 billion spent, instead of Carter's proposed \$12-16 billion), while the Republicans criticized it as too much and therefore inflationary; many Conservative were strongly against the tax cuts targeted for the low-income groups, as inflationary. Congress was soon to help revise that so that the rich got a better break.

In the Energy Plan submitted by the administration to Congress, there was an emphasis on coal, exploration of new oil, accent on solar and nuclear energy developments, the provision for removing price controls to encourage thrifty use of energy. The Schlesinger plan was not without problems. It allowed for wide profit margins to Big Business, based on a motheaten and historically inaccurate belief that higher prices of products in great demand would reduce usage. Such a pattern of course did *not* necessarily follow in the U.S. any more, as we have seen earlier. Higher profit margins could well tempt Big Business to advertise more heavily — in order to ensure consumption stayed high, a level *not at all* intended by the Administration. There were also the usual dangers in refusing to enforce mandatory wage and price controls. Bert Lance, Carter's OMB Director, had successfully used a kind of soft "jawboning" to get the steel industry to reduce its announced price increase of 10% down to 4.8%, but how often would it work?

From his first day in office, Carter stressed the urgency of energy conservation, inflation, employment, human rights, morality. The White House thermostat was now maintained at 68%. Carter asked the nation to do this too. The White House staff had been told they could not use the fleet of limousines for personal visits; staff reduction had already commenced in the Federal Government. Califano, the new Secretary of Health, Education Welfare (HEW) had reduced his own staff by 100. Carter had ordered that the fleet of White House planes and the luxury yachts be severely reduced. The presidential *Hail to the Chief* was not to be played except on formal state occasions. His own personal finances, even those of his Cabinet members, had been made public — the first time this had ever been done voluntarily. He insisted that an open door policy be maintained by his White House staff, the Cabinet, the Federal officials, the Department of Justice. He chose to be approachable, be

informal not only in his official Washington routine but on official trips in the country — where on more than one occasion he stopped for a night at farms. He had proven by his appointments and his many actions that he was firmly for equal rights for women and minorities. And he quickly also showed that his commitment to human rights was no rhetoric. He insisted that he would speak out publicly and privately against violations of human rights. And that his foreign policy would not be conducted in a clandestine way but with public awareness of how the Administration viewed each foreign policy issue.

The public had strongly voiced itself appalled at the frequent scandals, corruption and intrigue in Washington. The public — and media — had claimed to be contemptuous of the power hungry and corrupt career politicians. Now there was in the White House a man whom even his critics had to admit was genuinely moral and dedicated, intelligent and with proven ability — as Governor of Georgia and a Big Businessman — to lead efficiently. He lacked Washington experience — but that was what the public had claimed it wanted. What should responsible media's role have been towards this new and, in many ways, highly original new Administration, especially in view of media's professed abhorrence for past Government corruptions?

(iii)

Major media decided early that Carter's morality must be a pose. It mocked at the provincial Georgians. In the past U.S. media's attempts at snobbery were so obviously contrived and clumsy, that they were unconsciously funny. But in recent years, after selective youth values, and the inculcation of contemporary European styles with which youth seemed to be taken, major media — TV, print and movies — had made drastic changes in style, format, content, had even developed "new journalism".

From the heights of this new elan, media sniffed at the Carters, the "country boys" from Georgia, at the "aw shucks" presidency, which (as *Time's* Hugh Sidey wrote) was not comfortable with luxury (in actuality, Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter were a remarkably genteel couple, genuinely into the arts).

Under the glow of growing public approval which was to reach 77% before it crashed, Carter went ahead enthusiastically with his proposals for reform. He held monthly press conferences (more than any President ever) and he spoke frequently to the nation on TV. His TV talks were immediately characterized by media to be in imitation of Franklin Roosevelt's "fireside chats" and he was dubbed "Jimmy Cardigan" (because of the garment he wore), but he pressed on. Carter claimed not to mind. He even joked with reporters about the caricatures that were current about his smile and said he believed the press had a First Amendment right to an adversary role.

With astonishing speed, the Carter administration had prepared recommendations to Congress for reform. Within two days of taking office on January 20, 1977, Carter had overturned Ford's last-minute ruling and placed back gas price controls. On January 31, he asked Congress for emergency powers to restructure the Federal bureaucracy, streamline it down from the enormous waste that had been allowed to accumulate over the years. By April, he had an Energy Policy package ready for Congress, also Foods Stamps (Welfare) reform proposals and hospital controls proposals. On June 1, a massive Welfare reform package was sent to Congress, in



which eligibility requirements for Welfare, among other measures, were estimated to save the taxpayer \$3 billion annually.

In the meanwhile, Carter had used presidential powers to cut down drastically into Medicaide malpractices and corruption in 20 states by cutting federal payments where such corruption was found to be provable. By April, Carter's "Jobs Bill" was on its way to create 280,000 new jobs. In May, a \$5 billion tax cut for lower and middle income families was signed into law by Carter.

All this was within six months of taking office. In August, a Job Opportunities package for Welfare recipients was sent to Congress, followed by a stream of other proposals — Labor Reform, Auto Safety Regulations, and a firm Carter-backed proposal for setting up a Consumer Protection Agency (the agency to fight for consumer rights, which Nixon and Ford had both vetoed in the past). In the meanwhile, he had arm-wrestled the crippling coal miners' strike into submission; through his OMB Director Bert Lance, "jawboned" the steel industry into a sharp reduction of their planned price increases (which would have had far-reaching impact on the spiralling inflation). Even major media had to concede that his victories over opposition in Congress on some issues was quite amazing and argued great executive ability. He was to overcome enormous odds to get the Panama Canal Treaty passed, to get the arms ban against Turkey lifted, above all to sell F-15 to Saudi Arabia.

And he charged into hitherto sacrosanct areas. From the start of his presidency he pulled no punches against the medical profession, despite its very powerful Washington lobby, the American Medical Association, and the equally powerful pharmaceutical industry, for whom reverence for the medics was very profitable. Studies instituted by his Department of Health Education & Welfare (HEW) disclosed unending instances of corruption, rip-offs not just by fake welfare recipients but by the medical profession itself and exorbitant increases in medical costs, under cover of "OPEC inflation". In recent years, hospital costs alone had been skyrocketing to the point where a single major illness in even a middle income family — if not fully covered by insurance — could spell total financial disaster.

Carter went after another highly venerated and powerful profession: the legal profession. He did this, to start with, in the lion's own den. At a function of Los Angeles Bar Association, he said it was about time that lawyers began to consider the poor, instead of actively opposing social change. "We have the heaviest concentration of lawyers on earth but I am not sure we have more justice" he said to them; "Ninety percent of our lawyers serve 10% of our people. We must be beyond that comfortable insulation of privilege".

And Carter went after oil company profits. Finding media by then not too cooperative, Carter was to take the case to the people, himself and through his Cabinet members who were sent by him on nationwide tours, to tell the people that oil company profits currently were \$18 billion a year, that at the present rate alone, these profits would become \$100 billion a year by 1985. Not satisfied with this, (said Carter's representatives) the oil companies were pressuring Congress through their lobbyists to legislate so that the oil would be making \$150 billion a year in profits by 1985.

Was Carter playing up to the poor and the middle income among the electorate by such comments? Media seemed to think so; but then who was he catering to, when he chastised the American public in general?

At his Inaugural, he had set a wholly new pattern by saying "We have learnt that more is not necessarily better, to be true to ourselves we must be true to others. We



must not behave in foreign places so as to violate our rules and standards here at home for we know that this trust which our nation earns is essential to our strength". In his subsequent talks to the nation on TV, Carter frequently expanded on that; he told the American voters that we had become self-indulgent, too materialistic, too wasteful, too greedy; that we should not always expect our living standards to be advancing, that sacrifices must be made and less selfishness practiced. To a public oozing from every pore with yearnings for more of TV's advertised products and "upward mobility", Carter's message was like a thunderbolt from outer space. It was very heartening to hear someone — an American President, no less — telling the nation something that was long overdue, instead of the standard political flattery and rhetoric.

The fact that such criticism caused no ire in the American public is highly significant. Carter had established rapport with them. From the start his informal approachability had come as a refreshing change from the recent past. He had town meetings where he could be questioned by the common men and women; he would suddenly decide to visit a farm and spend the night with a rural family. He had agreed to a radio telethon on CBS Radio in which anyone, anywhere in the U.S., could phone in and ask him a question — politically a highly dangerous set-up; but he acquitted himself remarkably at this, sending his own public popularity soaring.

It was this growing grassroots support for Carter that made things hard for his detractors at the start, for all those who had reason to fear his reforms and in particular his "morality". Less than five percent of the business community had voted for Carter; but while the top echelon of the multinationals had reasons to fear his attitudes, there were many within the business community who were willing to give him a chance now; some had realised that the so-called "pro-business" politicians were in fact for the very few conglomerates and not for the average business at all, and definitely not working for the national economic well-being; Carter, as a self-made millionaire, could well be relied upon to understand the genuine concerns and tribulations of the average business entrepreneur, they felt. However, for the mighty conglomerates who controlled the Washington lobbies and were the spokesmen for Big Business, Carter's "reforms", his crusades against profiteering, his expected cuts on "defense" spendings (for which they were the contractors), his tax reform measures, even his Human Rights campaign in foreign lands, all these were nightmares that had to be fought. If allowed to grow, all the Op-Con effort of recent years would be wasted away and this time the President would have the support of the people.

Carter had reassured the military that he was not for drastic cuts, however, but for a strong defense; in fact his first year military budget was to be \$121 billion; nevertheless he had immediately cancelled the B-1 bomber production that Ford had started; he was strongly opposed to American hard-sell of military supplies to foreign countries, made into a major industry by the Nixon-Kissinger regime. Reduction in arms sales abroad would certainly cut into the Military-Industrial complex. Besides, in his determination to cut the "fat" out of the Federal bureaucracy, he would certainly include the military, and what would the harvest be? Periodically reports of lavish wastes and excesses by the military found their way to the public; steadily adding 10-20% to estimates for billion-dollar contracts out of "contingency" funds; generals sending airforce planes to fetch their golf-clubs; what would happen to military conventions and "seminars" in Las Vegas? To weekend entertainment of key military personnel by Big Business executives?

In one of TV's now rare exposés by an investigative reporter, later, (Jan 8'79) ABC-TV's 20-20 segment cited examples of blatant corruption in Pentagon purchases. For instance, 25 cent door knobs were bought in astronomical numbers for \$35 each; \$5 bolts were bought for \$96; \$12 pulleys for \$131 each. It was standard practice to leave sundry purchases of less than \$10,000 to clerical staff. When enormous quantities were bought and not used, the supplier took them back, usually at 10% of the price charged. With the military budget of \$121 billion, a waste of a few hundred million no doubt seemed like small change to the Pentagon.

Republican politicians were of course, working hard from January to discredit Carter and to win "respect" from the American people. The image-making machinery set up by Nixon was conducting massive tracking studies, the results of which were used in forming strategies, communicating with loyal supporters and would-be supporters through the humming computers in Leesburg, Virginia and Beltsville, Md, sending material to millions of Americans across the nation.

The Op-Con extremist segment, now firmly in the hands of Ronald Reagan had, in addition to other segments of the Power Cartel, the enormous power of the National Rifle Association, with its lobbying facilities, its own 1.8 million membership, who could be switched on instantly at even a suggestion of Gun Control; they were wholly for Reagan, whose movie and TV Cowboy image itself made gun control abhorrent.

Could Carter have won against these very powerful elements of the Power Cartel? A great deal would have depended on how fully, major media — especially TV — continued to support the Big Business/Military/Republican Conservatives. The top echelon in media always had and would continue to do so, but if the people were with Carter, TV in particular would have to ease up on criticizing Carter — after all, TV networks had to sell each day.

But what if the crusading Carter, with the public behind him, were to institute some basic reforms which would immediately show all Americans great economic relief? Carter and his administration had not as yet said (or apparently understood) the enormous impact — materially and psychologically — of the enormous advertising expenditure and the skew of TV programming on inflation. But even without reform in this area, critical though it was, improvement in the lot of the common man and woman would be easily discernable with the reform proposals he had in mind.

With public support Carter could twist arms in Congress to pass basic tax reform, and the closing of the most blatant tax loopholes. And, if detente went as it was likely to go, major cuts in defense spendings would bring further relief to the average American; bribes, and kickbacks and tax evasion itself cost the American economy over \$125 billion a year; a Consumer Protection Agency at Federal level would have the clout to control some of the worst excesses of Big Business which would also provide pocket-book relief to the American consumer. On all this alone, the average American could well save 10-15% of his annual earnings. Media now had many young people who had learnt about the economy from their bosses and followed the line dutifully. But what if facts began to emerge, with pocket-book relief from Carter's reforms? And, if the public mood truly followed Carter through these reforms, could there not be mass desertions? It had happened in the Vietnam War, in the youth movement, during the Watergate revelations.

Carter's popularity was enhanced by the fact that he was starting to bring respect back for America abroad. Contrary to the claims made by Ford during his 1976



campaign, the image of the U.S. had sunk, as we have seen, to an all-time low not only in the Third World (where every move of the U.S. was suspect), but in Europe as well. Carter's image was changing all that, especially in the Third World. Carter's approach seemed to come as an immediate balm. In no time at all, there was already a shift towards a return to the old respect and trust for the U.S.. In Carter, the Third World, even the heavily exploited nations, saw an honesty, sincerity and moral principles that they had given up as non-existent in the U.S.. Even the most "radical" leaders of the exploited Latin American countries like Panama and Brazil were voicing respect for Carter".\*

It was his Human Rights campaign that was mainly responsible for this. At the start, these countries cynically viewed it as yet another slick gimmick from the U.S. but quickly they felt a sincerity behind it. Warm emotions welled. For the first time in many years, an American was given a standing ovation and prolonged applause at the U.N.. And that American was the U.S. President.

Though media underplayed Carter's remarkable success with foreign countries (the Carter approach was after all not what media had advocated), the news was reaching the American populace. It would soon become yet another important reason for ensuring Carter's popularity at home. Despite all the anger and bitterness, echoed by the American public in response to media training against an "ungrateful" world, the public wanted peace and good relations. Above all, they yearned for "respect" and it was genuine "respect" that Carter was now starting to receive from the world, even the Third World.

What, then, went wrong for Carter?

It was that very morality that caused his downfall. Big Business and Military Brass were already upset. They were certainly ready to damage him; Big Business would have proceeded to voice fears and no confidence. Its congressional allies would have frozen Carter's reform proposals. Now Carter in his Human Rights campaign, included, in the family of Man, the Palestinians. And that not only caused the powerful Zionist lobby to roll up its sleeves, but it added deep emotional resentment towards Carter in major media which was already irritated by his reform proposals against Big Business.

It began in Clinton, Massachusetts in March 1977 at a town meeting, when, in response to a question, he talked about the rights of the Palestinian people. In September at a news conference, he said that if the PLO accepted Israel's right to exist "we will meet with them". As the PLO had already voiced this concession more than once, it clearly signalled that finally the U.S. was willing to talk with the Palestinians. Then on October 1, came the US-USSR joint communique from the U.N. for a Geneva conference at which a peaceful settlement to the Middle East would be sought, which specifically mentioned "the rights of the Palestinians".

Zionist fury, which had expressed itself at each of the previous statements, was now unbounded. American TV, along with most major media, unleashed their swords. From Washington to New York to Hollywood, politicians, radio, print and TV

\* Carter sent Rosslyn Carter (who spoke Spanish fluently) as his emissary to Latin America early in his Presidency, a move that evoked shock and scepticism among politicians and media. In an intensely feminist era, media could not question her ability as a woman for the very delicate task of improving the deteriorating relations with Latin America; some therefore questioned her experience and suggested nepotism. And media suggested however that the Latins were "macho" oriented, and may resent a woman emissary. Rosslyn Carter returned in a blaze of glory, with a lot of praise from the Latin leaders.



commentators, producers, scriptwriters and stand-up comedians threw themselves into the "Dump Carter" campaign. Some very subtle, sophisticated, others blatant and crude, they went after Carter. Before they were through, Carter had plummeted to become the most unpopular president in U.S. history. The average American could not say exactly why and on which specific issue he had failed (until the Iran hostage issue), why he was so worthy of being despised, ridiculed, hopeless; at best they could merely repeat what their favorite news commentator may have said most recently. It became *embarrassing* not to find fault with Carter. Foreign correspondents, traditionally taking the lead from the American media, repeated the standard criticism, the carps.

European audiences and readers got the same message — that he was unsure, blundering President, who had messed up the economy, was too weak with foreign adversaries (especially Russia, later Iran); carried out none of the promises he had made, "flip flopped". His morality was now his hypocrisy, dark accusations hovered over his closest aides, his friends, himself and his family. Most of America were now convinced morality was not necessary in a President, and many felt it was an *impediment*.

In August 1978, an ABC-Yankelovich poll showed that 69% of American felt Carter was not doing a satisfactory job. At that time the score card on some of the Carter "reform" proposals sent to Congress within the first few months of taking office, stood like this:

Energy Package — still in Congress, with various forces pulling each of the proposals in different directions.

Income Tax Reform — torn to shreds by Special Interests; in fact what Congress did pass that very month was a Tax Bill that gave even more benefits to the very rich.

Department of Education — Carter felt schools needed more attention and wanted a special Dept of Education (no action in Congress).

Consumer Protection Agency — killed in Congress.

Labor Law Reforms — the Carter proposals were backed by the unions, included tight regulations against unfair exploitation. Killed in the Senate through a "fillibuster" (opposing Senators read novels and the Bible until the rest of the Senate gave up).

Hospital Cost Containment — languished in Congress.

Crude Oil Tax Proposal — stalled in Congress.

Lobbyists Reform measures (to compulsorily disclose contributions made to elected officials), was crushed in Congress.

Soon Carter's popularity was to plummet in one poll to 17%, much below any President ever. The public did not understand that the Congress was holding up on his proposals and that Carter was trying through desperate means to get congressional action. Once, in November 1978 he even cancelled a nine-nation trip, an unheard of concession, because the time seemed opportune to get some reform measures passed in Congress. Media simply did not report congressional chicanery. TV commentators, as we shall see, did not have to lie. They could leave the truth unspoken and accuse Carter by inference. The average American was fuzzy anyway about how the three branches of government functioned.

In many ways, irrespective of Carter's own weaknesses against the massive onslaught, it was an acid test of the American Experiment. Could a President follow moral principles and survive at this point in American history? The rejection of Carter was not merely the rejection of a President, but of the morality that made him

unpopular. Future Presidents and presidential hopefuls would bear that firmly in mind.

How was it done? In many ways, it represented the ultimate achievement of image-making. We need to look more closely at the facts; at the political gamesmanship; at some events that were shaped and others created out of thin air; how the American public was fully molded into the required shape by the Power Cartel; above all, we need to understand some basics of news and entertainment media's enormous role in this achievement and how strategists played their subtle and sophisticated role to rid America of the vague vestiges of New Values of the 1960's, and much of its founding principles.

(iv)

Carter's presidency was to be dominated by the Middle East. He announced early that it was the most important foreign policy issue; however, because his own assessment of the situation and solution differed so strongly with those of his predecessors and resulted eventually in open hostility from Israeli leaders and U.S. major media, it was to play an even greater role in the tragedy of his presidency. Whether he could have succeeded against the wealth and strategic skills of Op-Con opposition had it not been for the immense Zionist influence on media would be hard to say. As it was, the handwriting was on the wall much before the Op-Cons' eventual victory.

We need therefore to concentrate on some of the reasons behind Carter's Middle East agonies, which became his agonies in domestic affairs as well.

Shortly after his Clinton, Mass meeting where he had talked of the just rights of the Palestinians as essential to recognize to find a solution in the Mideast, Carter despatched Cyrus Vance, his Secretary of State, to the Mideast for talks with the various Arab countries and with Israel. TV News followed its standard practice of reflecting Israel's views as its own sometimes using the typical covering e.g. "political observers who did not wish to be named", "A U.S. State Department official" and so on. In view of the Carter bombshell on Palestinian rights, the visit was watched and reported with deliberation noting the favorable impression the Arabs seemed to be making on Vance. TV news celebrities sprayed their messages with pregnant pauses, subtle deadpan glances at the camera (and at the audiences). In "dialogues" between TV commentators, TV established that in pursuing a policy of "encouraging" the Palestinians with hopes of a homeland, the new Administration would seem to be planning to "put pressure" on Israel, even reduce "U.S. commitment" to Israel, that this "may" not be the wisest course. The Palestinian "terrorists" may feel encouraged, the Arabs would "demand" more "concessions", the Israelis may feel left out in the cold, alone, as Jews had been during the Nazi holocaust.

Arab leaders had been invited to come to Washington. Hossein of Jordan and Sadat of Egypt came, but Syria's Assad did not.\* Then came Carter's own trip to Europe where he met Assad in Geneva. He was apparently impressed with Assad, describing him as "brilliant", "great", even as one of his "favorite leaders".

\* "The Syrian President had turned down Carter's invitation to make a political *hadj* to Washington" was *Time's* comment (May 23, 1977). Assad was angry because of what he saw as U.S. betrayal in Lebanon.

In its May 23, '77 issue, *Time* magazine, in an article entitled "New Friends Upset Special Relation", said Israeli "diplomats" were "convinced from statements made by Carter and Vance that a U.S. position is emerging and that it contains these five points", i.e., that Israel and Palestine should recognize each other as states, a Palestinian homeland, Israel's withdrawal to pre-1967 borders, normalization of relations between Israel and its Arab neighbors, and that major moves towards these settlements must be made in 1977 itself. The Israeli "diplomats" then went on to tell *Time* why so many of these points were bad. In that same article, *Time* went on to admit that Saudi Arabia's Prince Faud had told newsmen that the PLO would be willing to recognize Israel in return for a Palestinian homeland. "U.S. diplomats" added *Time*, however, "doubted that PLO's Yasser Arafat and his followers were ready to make such a commitment right now". Who these "diplomats" were, *Time* did not say. It was not required by its trained readership to say so. Nor did *Time* have to say why, in its December 6, 1976 it had reported that Arafat *was willing, not only to accept the state of Israel, but willing to make a homeland from a strip of land on the Left Bank and Gaza Strip, and that Arafat (according to Time's own report) had forcefully told all Palestinians after that 1976 Arab summit that this must be accepted.\**

In these very delicate times, a series of internal causes resulted in the unfortunate election of Menachem Begin, the extremist, once leader of the notorious Irgun Zvai Leum terrorist group. The task of selling him even to the average American Jew was not easy.

*Time* magazine in an article headlined "Stormy Start For A Stylish Hardliner" (July 4, 1977) said "Begin's public manner is *courtly and polite in an old-fashioned European way*, but he is also a meticulous and demanding executive. He rises at 5 a.m., reads Hebrew, French and English newspapers and is at his desk at 8" (*italics added*). Begin was being presented as "courtly, old-fashioned European gentleman"\*\*\* in all U.S. media so that any talk about him as a former terrorist who had killed indiscriminately would be forgotten by the older generations and never believed by the young.

Senators Javits and Stone (both members of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee) went to Israel shortly after Begin's election and returned with glowing reports about Israel's new Prime Minister. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (the official "summit" lobby) then prepared a "White Paper" stating, among other things, that Begin's reputation as a terrorist was a myth. Begin, said the White Paper, had been a Freedom Fighter and his men had only attacked military targets, not civilians.

In Britain, according to the British press, the Begin sell was not doing too well as yet. For one thing, there were still people alive who had witnessed the massacre in Palestinian villages such as Dier Yassin. And there were survivors from the bombing of the David Hotel who knew who had set the bombs off that had taken nearly 60 lives of hotel guests and staff. (Beginites insisted they were British military staff).

In the U.S., those early negative feelings were soon ironed out when Begin arrived for his first visit; he was enthusiastically received by the media and the public.

\* It must be remembered that Arafat was far more powerful over all PLO factions then. Later, more horrors provided more support to the extremists.

\*\* When Begin visited the U.S., one photograph that made it in just about all major print media and in slides on TV was that of Begin kissing the hand of Mrs Cyrus Vance.



(v)

Carter's image problems were, on the other hand, only just starting. Even before he dropped the October 1 bombshell, he was annoying the Zionists and Special Interests in other ways.

Carter was still very popular with the public and still enthusiastically charging ahead with his reform campaign. He was pushing hard at a reluctant Congress to pass some of the measures he had proposed and he was actively pursuing his Human Rights campaign.

He had announced early that governments who were offenders on human rights (stifled individual freedom, suppressed political opposition, tortured dissidents etc) would be warned and aid would be reduced or cut off. By midyear, Carter and Vance talked of cutting off aid to Chile, Nicaragua,\* Argentina, Uruguay, Ethiopia; and Carter was said to have already warned the Shah of Iran. Many of these countries of course had dictatorships with "traditional" heavy links to U.S. Big Business and CIA operations.

He also condemned Russia for not permitting dissidents to leave freely in which he received strong support from media. But Carter, still crusader for Truth, Justice and The American Way, irked the Israelis, the Military and Big Business defense contractors more by announcing that not only should arms sales to foreign countries be reduced, but that the military aid to Israel should also be curbed. He had blocked the sale of 24 Israeli-made Kfir war planes to Ecuador (planes powered with *American* jet engines) and then cancelled the "transfer" of the American BCU-72 bombers to Israel when 100 new settlements in occupied Arab territories were now announced by Israel in May '77. Carter and Vance felt a tangible reprimand for this disregard for legalities was necessary (it must be remembered that the settlements were started by the Labor Government).

There was another reason too. Since 1970, when Nixon had decided on a full scale arms export policy, the U.S. have given, by *official* estimates, \$6,900,000,000\*\* worth of arms to Israel. "In return for this largesse (of arms), Israel has provided U.S. military chiefs and arms makers with a unique opportunity of a battlefield laboratory, as it were, where advance weapons and electronic systems have been tested in four Middle East Wars", said *Time* (January 31, 1977). In other words, the Pentagon was obliged to Israel for *test-marketing* the effectiveness of the various weapons of death which the U.S., could not test because it had no war and because of public opinion, but it could get factual "field" reports from Israel on how they worked when it chose to use them on the Arabs.

But, now there was a "subtle campaign of criticism of Israel by some U.S. arms manufacturers who were once its staunchest supporters". The reason? Israel, overloaded and overflowing with military hardware, said *Time*, had taken to "stealing U. S. technology and 'reinventing' it in made-in-Israel weapons". Not only was Israel stealing but it was selling to countries whom the U.S. had on a black list! It sold to dictatorship and others for whom the Carter government now had stopped or reduced

\* Nicaragua was still under the dictatorship of General Somoza Jr.

\*\* Israeli arms exports were estimated as reported by *Time* — to be \$340,000,000 in 1976 and expected to be \$450,000,000 in 1977. They were likely to be much higher if Israel were allowed to market what *Time* called a "deadly bastard sired from the French mirage and a General Electric J-79 engine" which sold at "\$4,200,000 a copy".

military supplies, because of human rights violations. Israel was a major arms supplier to South Africa, to Samoz's Nicaragua.

Media now commenced to intensify its questioning of Carter's morality and his Human Rights campaign in the Third World. TV news experts raised questions about Carter's "naivete", the dangers of being moral in foreign policy. The format for making these suggestions was subtle and telling. The anchorman (Walter Conkite on CBS, John Chancellor on NBC and one of the swiftly changing men at ABC) would give a basic comment about "concerns were being voiced about the Carter administration's policies; correspondent XYZ reports" cut to the correspondent standing outside the White House (or with an opposing political figure), and he would say "Foreign relations experts (or "officials who did not wish to be named"; or "A senior State Department official") are concerned about President Carter's Human Rights campaign, his crusade as one official put it and his naivete in pursuing his objectives in a world situation which is not ready for such evangelical missions". There would be a comment or two about traditional friendly leaders being bothered by this holier-than-thou interference. There would sometimes be an exchange of views with the anchorman, who would then ask a question or two (in a very grave concerned tone, ensuring that the audience realised how serious it all is) about any feedbacks that the correspondents may have heard from his "sources". On the cue, the correspondent would reluctantly (because he did not want to criticize the President but felt compelled to answer the question) cite the example of a traditionally friendly leader (e.g., Samosa of Nicaragua) who had angrily denounced the new U.S. administration's policies as dangerous, cited his own historical friendship with the past administrations, expressed chagrin that the U.S. was now giving aid and comfort to his communist enemies by criticizing his internal policies (all friendly dictators characterized their political opposition as communists). The TV correspondent would then cite another friendly leader's unhappiness and then he would cite "the growing concern, the hurt, in Israel", and how the Israelis were "beginning to feel that the U.S. was turning away from them under the Carter administration"; and "as one Israeli official emotionally put it, Jews have been alone against the world before, they have been through the Nazi concentration camps, and so, if necessary, they will face anti-Semitism and hatred of their enemies, without U.S. friendship, rather than surrender".\*

Any employee with ambition at any large corporation knows that a critical rule to follow is to be in line with top management policy; the most obvious policy at the TV networks was all too apparent with regard to the Middle East. Therefore all reporters seeking news celebrity status (or indeed being selected for TV exposure even in a minor capacity) were those more than willing to tow the line. Even the blacks, now being selected for news broadcasts, vied to be more pro-Zionist than others, to reach the pie in the sky. Those lower down the ladder (e.g. the local news) were even more willing.

Kissinger was brought on TV news broadcasts periodically (as the foreign affairs "genius") to voice grave concern with Carter's Human Rights policy; morality in foreign policy, he said, was a very dangerous course to pursue. Former President

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\* It might be noted that editorial preparations for the network *Evening News* begins at least twenty-four hours in advance, as soon as the previous day's work is completed; often segments are taped and carried subsequently. All such seemingly "live" exchanges are therefore hardly extemporaneous. They have been carefully worded, taped, timed to fit the segment.

Ford was resurrected from the golf links and ski resorts to provide his expert opinion that he did not think Carter was doing the right things; then he went back to the golf course and ski resorts.\*

In his column in *Time* (August 1, 1977) entitled "A Hard Man To Package And Label", Sidey mockingly complained about the inability to know where Carter was going and therefore hard to label him; William Safire, columnist with *The New York Times* (formerly a Nixon speech writer) sarcastically suggested "Pure Deal"; a cartoonist asked "How About Band Aid?". Media was used to being able to pigeon-hole a President; he should have a set policy towards each group, each country, irrespective of what the particular issues and events might be. Carter was "confusing" and irksome to the professional political observer for this reason as well.

Other media were being more blatant or more subtle depending on their audiences. Some such as the *Jewish Press* and *Daily News* were furiously attacking Carter already on behalf of Israel. WMCA, a leading "talk" radio station of New York (whose "talk show hosts" had following throughout the country among the "conservative" and Zionist segments) were already starting to go to extremes in their denunciations of Carter's "anti-Israel" attitude; Barry Farber and Bob Grant had become cult figures among their audiences for this reason.

In some ways, the Israeli anger was understandable. Fiercely committed to the concept of Zion as the Israeli homeland, they lived in constant fear of PLO extremist guerilla attacks. To the Zionists severe punishment towards the Palestinians was essential, not concern for their claims to a homeland. Not since Eisenhower's famous statement after the 1956 War had Israel's posture towards the Palestinians ever been questioned by a U.S. administration. Now Carter seemed to be going against the established U.S. position to find fault with the Israelis and even consider a homeland for the Palestinians.

With the stage set through the awesome power of TV to be critical of Carter, the mammoth newspaper empires were beginning to come alive with their own campaigns. To these newspaper empires, Carter's tax reform and other "liberal" inclinations were abhorrent. Soon, as the "Dump Carter" campaign became fully fledged, these newspaper giants joined in for their own political objectives.\*

As the (as yet) relatively mild but insistent criticism of Carter permeated across American media, the lobbyists and their congressional flunkies breathed more freely. Carter's "reform" measures were being held up in Congress and the erring Congressmen had been uneasy. With Carter's popularity among the public as high as it had been, they feared what might happen if Carter did take the "case to the public" and denounced Congress for dragging its feet. Now things were looking better. Big Business was already into the standard stance it employed when a President not too friendly occupied the White House. In these circumstances Big Business always claimed that they were unsure of his policies, were afraid to invest or plan expansions. Consequently the economy would sag — allowing pro-Business politicians to tell the nation that it was the President who had messed up the economy. It was a ploy that had worked ever since the post-Civil War heydays for Big Business monopolists.

\* When the cult leader Jim Jones and his 911 disciples committed mass suicide in 1979, TV and the print media across the nation. One editor of the Newhouse newspapers' chain refused to print the photograph (spliced to just Jones and Mrs. Carter) was splashed on TV screens and print function. The photograph because he felt it was falsely associating Mrs Carter with the Jones' cult. He was fired.



(vi)

Once a people's candidate is elected, the exploited are apt to become demanding, angry, irritable if the demands are not quickly met, and redress to their cumulative grievances not available. There was much to be said for the problems of urgency for the neglected poor and the sick in America when Carter was elected. In many ways their impatience was understandable, after systematic neglect, especially after their hopes had risen so high during the 1960s.

The same was no doubt true of Third World countries. With Carter they felt they could get redress; if they did not get it fast enough, they were apt to become demanding and impatient.

These are human quirks, understandable, but also very dangerous to their own interests in the long run. And it was illustrated now with the press conference called by Vernon Jordan, President of the Urban League, a national organization for minority rights.

Jordan announced that he and the blacks of America had been firm supporters of Carter in the recent election which had enabled Carter to edge out Ford, but he said he was very disappointed with Carter's performance in the first several months of his presidency, that Carter had let the blacks down, had not done anything for them.

Was Jordan encouraged to make these allegations against Jimmy Carter with a promise of national media exposure or did he decide, with his own advisers, that such a public statement was necessary political pressure to apply on Carter? Jordan must undoubtedly have known even if the general public did not, that Carter's many reform proposals were being held up in Congress. Perhaps at a time of the me-first, single-issue lobbies, he felt it essential to apply that pressure and certainly the blacks and the American Indians had a far greater right than any other one-issue group to demand and apply pressure for redress.

But it was obviously self-defeating. It allowed media to broadcast this disillusionment of blacks with Carter, on TV, radio, print, for several days. The average black TV viewer, like the average white who only vaguely followed the news, would have come away convinced that Carter was no different from his predecessors. An important segment of Carter supporters had been diluted within a few months of his presidency.

It also allowed the Op-Cons to point out to their constituencies that demands come to be made by the 'Have-nots' when a weak leader is in charge. And it all left the white majority with the uneasy feeling that somehow Carter would tend to give more consideration to black grievances, especially after such a national blitz of Vernon Jordan's accusation.

A more direct attack on Carter's credibility was now to come in the form of a major media spectacle — the televised hearings of a Senate sub-Committee on Bert Lance, Carter's OMB Director, and one of his closest friends.

When he was elected president, Carter had persuaded Bert Lance to give up his position as President of the National Bank of Georgia and come to Washington to become Director of OMB (Office of Management and Budget). Carter as a non-Washingtonian was keen to get people he knew well to take important positions in his team. Lance did not want to come (aside from anything else, it meant a considerable loss in earnings) but Carter had finally persuaded him.

Lance, like all such federal appointees, was nominated by the President, but had

to be confirmed by the Congress. The Congress had questioned him, his banking practices, then confirmed the appointment.

Now, accompanied by headline stories for some weeks, Lance was being accused of various banking malpractices in the past — even suggestions of misappropriation and tax evasion. A Senate sub-Committee hearing was scheduled.

The setting of the Senate Committee hearing was highly significant. It was an exact duplication of the setting for the Senate Watergate hearings — only this time it was Republicans making the accusations; even the TV coverage was almost identical. The reasons were obvious — the Republicans were making a desperate attempt to erase Watergate from the public's mind, and to be accepted as "wholesome" again.

As the hearings progressed it became obvious that they would be a farce, a hilarious one at that, were it not for the fact that one man's future rested on the outcome. Lance was on the *offensive* from the start. The accusing Senators squirmed in their seats for the most part. The main case against him was that as President of the National Bank of Georgia he had, like all Southern small town bankers, been lax in following specific bureaucratic procedures; he had made loans without proper collateral (securities), sanctioned overdrafts on judgement even to his own family, taken trips on the company plans for personal reasons (which he claimed were business related). Lance's defense was that all small town bankers had to use judgement and not be sticky about collaterals; anyone who was sticky would lose business. Did not the Senators from the South know this themselves? He had disclosed all this at his confirmation hearing; he had answered many of these very questions then, he said; why had no one brought all this up then? No one could raise one single instance to show that he had breached any rules after taking the job as Director of OMB, he said. Why this sudden obsession with his past job? And was not the fact that he had made the bank one of the most successful banks proof that he had not harmed the bank?

In fact, the Bank's assets had doubled under Lance.\* Ironically, the Senators expressing shock and dismay were Republicans — including Jacob Javits, Abraham Ribacoff, Charles Percy — and it was always the Republicans who said there should be less "red tape" for Big Business to function smoothly. To anyone familiar with the practices on Capitol Hill, it was strange to see Senators acting horror-stricken on TV camera at finding Lance had given loans without adequate securities.

Lance's own deeply emotional denunciation of media's sensationalism (he held up a copy of *The New York Times* to prove his point at one stage) and of the Committee's excesses did much to sober up the Senators. The ludicrous spectacle was made even more ludicrous by the fact that none of the half-veiled charges could actually be made. Nothing was proven except that years ago, when Lance was running for a local office in Georgia, he may (probably did) take a chartered plane ride for personal reasons. The Committee tried hard to add something more — at one stage of the investigation, testimony had been taken from a Bill Campbell. Who was Campbell? He had been an executive in Lance's bank, whom Lance had found embezzling money, and Lance himself had handed him over to the FBI. Now the

\* *Time* magazine (September 19 '77) was later to quote a former President of the National Bank of Georgia as confirming that "He (Lance) had more new projects going in 24 months than we had in the previous 24 years".

Senators had decided that Campbell (convicted on the embezzling charges) was a fitting witness in his accusations against Lance!

An angry comment at one stage by Senator Eagleton, a member of the sub-Committee, summed it all up. He spoke with reference to one of the irresponsible charges released by a Senator to the media, which had headlined it; then the Senator had quickly withdrawn the charge. "On September 9, Senator Percy gave every indication that Lance was a tax fraud cheat" said Eagleton "and in his mellifluous tones he [Percy] said 'well, you know, I'm not saying you are a tax cheat, I am saying inferences can be drawn therefrom'. Yesterday, Senator Percy said 'I apologise for any anguish I may have caused you over the weekend.' Marvelous! We're playing with a man's character and his decency and his reputation here. The charge of being a tax fraud will linger around Mr. Lance for the rest of his life. We can't play fast and loose with the reputation of any person, because all we take to our grave is our reputation. And in some measures Mr Lance has been irrevocably tarnished".

Carter's well-wishers had advised him that while Lance might be innocent of any wrongdoing in his past, just the massive media publicity of Lance's cavalier, Southern attitude towards banking bureaucracy would hurt Carter with a public who might only vaguely understand the facts, especially as a lot of them were being made using technical terms that had the aura of grave crimes. But Carter refused. He wanted, after all the accusations hinted at by media, that Lance should be allowed "his day in court".

No evidence of legal wrongdoing was established by the Senate's weeklong hearings. Predictably, the Senators and media were not about to lose face in public without something to fall back upon. Lance's use of the plane for personal or political purposes (Lance at the time had been running for a Georgia public office) was considered by the Congress as a matter worthy of being pursued because it *could* be illegal. Forgotten in all this was the fact that in 1976, during the presidential campaign, many in media had gone to great lengths (with Republican politicians) to claim that President Ford in "dipping into campaign funds for personal use" had merely done something everyone did! And Ford had been running for President of the U.S. whereas Lance had run for a political office in a Southern town some years ago.

The pathos in what media had grandly labelled "The Lance Affair" (a catchy title) was apparent when Mrs Bert Lance, spoke in the only interview she gave at the time. The daughter of a small town millionaire, very Southern and religious, she seemed wholly confused by it all. She could not understand, she said, why so many people could go out of their way to ruin a man's reputation — and a man who they knew well, had liked, known to be good and religious. They had come to Washington when they did not want to come at all. Their close friend Jimmy Carter had forced them to come. And now they were ruined.

Lance himself had struck a cord when, between his periods of angry denunciation he would turn his round face (he was said to be normally a very jolly, boisterous person) at the Senators and in a puzzled emotional voice, ask "Why are you doing this to me?". At others time he was angry but controlled. In fact when Carter's Press Secretary Jody Powell once lost his temper at Senator Percy's accusations during the hearings, Lance sent Powell a lead pencil with the message "Although you get close to lead poisoning from biting the bullet, you won't. This too, shall pass".

Lance resigned after the hearings and Carter did not stop him. For Lance it did *not* pass. His holdings — in trust when he took over the government position — were apparently in a very poor state. Media followed up periodically with the



"investigations". It was reported that he was kept from bankruptcy by a huge loan from some wealthy Arabs — that itself was the kiss of death. The investigations pursued Lance into private life.

Lance said Carter had known nothing about his (Lance's) banking operations except that Lance had made a tremendous success of his bank and had come to be looked upon as a banking genius (a point media also conceded). But media continued to repeat that Carter had dealt with the Lance bank, had taken business loans from it though he had repaid them. It was implied that somehow Carter had not revealed the truth. But Carter *had* revealed those family loans from Lance's bank, from the time Lance was nominated.

Media said that Carter's "much publicized insistence that members of his administration must avoid even the appearance of wrongdoing" had been tarnished. How much had Carter known about Lance's banking practices? And if he did, why had he nominated him? Did it not show lack of good judgement, hypocrisy?

The results of all this were predictable. In the next Gallop poll, Carter's popularity already inching down to 57% had now fallen to 52%.

But while this undoubtedly bothered Carter, the pain he had suffered from the Lance public character assassination seemed to have taken something out of the man. Lance was a very close personal friend and he had forced him to come to Washington.

Considered objectively, however, it is true that no matter how prevalent such cavalier banking practices were in small towns, no matter how much success Lance had made of the bank, and no matter how furious Congressmen themselves would be if a banker refused them a loan on technicalities, the fact that Lance had conducted business in this fashion was certainly cause to question and even reject his nomination as Director of OMB. But the Congress had not done that. It had confirmed him.

Even if they had now decided to change their minds, bearing in mind that as Director of OMB his work, carefully scrutinized, had been found to be strictly in accordance with bureaucratic procedures, and the fact that Congress itself had confirmed him was reason enough for Congress to have gone to Carter, offered whatever additional concerns they had with Lance's past practices as a banker, and asked for Lance to resign.

Instead a spectacle and a carnival had been created — without being able to prove any wrongdoing that could be prosecuted.

But there was a reason for all the spectacle. It was not to be an isolated case, merely the first of many attacks at Carter through those he held very dear. There was to be Hamilton Jordan, (his Chief of Staff, whom he and his wife said they always looked upon as a son) accused of sniffing cocaine. Andrew Young, the UN Ambassador, a very close personal friend and Carter's staunchest supporter among the black leadership, who would have to resign because he was said to have met the PLO; and there was to be Billy Carter, the President's brother, accused of being anti-Semite and in the pay of Libya (the Carter brothers had in fact an aunt who was Jewish!).

In none of these cases was any wrongdoing proven. But the wild publicity and anger it generated served the purpose. Each time, Carter seemed to lose a part of himself.

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In September, 1977, Carter at his monthly news conference, said that if the PLO

accepted Israel's right to exist "we will meet with them". Since the PLO had on more than one occasion, expressed this concession since 1975, it seemed only a matter of time before the US would meet PLO leaders, thereby recognizing that Palestinians did in fact exist.

The snag so far in reality had been that the PLO were willing to recognize Israel provided that Israel simultaneously agreed to recognize Palestinian rights to a homeland. Would the U.S. now pressure Israel to recognize the Palestinians?

Then, as we have noted, there came the shock that was even more ominous; on October 1, a joint U.N. communique from the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. was issued, that included in an outline of peaceful settlement in the Middle East, "ensuring the rights of the Palestinian people". Not only did the communique of the two joined chairmen of a Geneva Conference include the word "Palestinian" but it was now talking about their rights.

TV, and radio print commentators, Zionist leaders, Congressmen and "experts" scorched the airways with their denunciations. Some attempted to be controlled, others did not. Media announced that Begin had been shown the communique 36 hours before it was released and he was now in hospital; his doctor said it was possibly a heart attack from the shock. Jewish and Zionist leaders asked Jews to send letters and telegrams to the White House. In all, over 7,000 telegrams and 800 telephone calls poured upon the U.S. President. Senators Jackson, Moynihan, Chase called a press conference to denounce the White House policy.

So confident of public support was the wave of anger, that when Carter arrived in New York to deliver his address to the U.N. — an address, incidentally that stressed human rights and respect for one another with such sincerity that for the first time, in many years, the U.N. members stood and applauded with evident new respect for a U.S. President — Congressman Koch, then campaigning to become Mayor of New York, in greeting Mr. Carter, handed him a note of protest against the October 1 communique. Carter "visibly angry" (reported *Time* magazine later) handed the letter to his Press Secretary and "moved on to shake other hands". Koch of course had informed media about his letter and its contents earlier so the event got a lot of publicity. Koch later apologised to President Carter — so he got his cake and ate it too.

But while outwardly tranquil at the onslaught, Carter was apparently suitably subdued, even frightened by it. Israel's Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan arrived in the U.S. a few days later, and the joint statement issued after a meeting by the U.S. Secretary of State Vance and Dayan "seemed to back away from the freshly-minted U.S.-Soviet declaration in many ways" said *Time* (Oct 17, '77). After his own meeting with Dayan, Carter was reported "to have struck out from his prepared text a sharp passage criticizing Israel for continuing to establish settlements on the occupied West Bank" said *Time*. At the conclusion of the meeting with Dayan, Carter reportedly asked Dayan where he was going next. Dayan said he was going to Chicago to speak with Jewish leaders. And Carter said "Do me a favor. Don't attack me". This quote appeared in a banner-headline "exclusive", two-page article by reporter Sidney Zion, of the *New York Post* (November 1, '77 issue). In the lengthy article Zion provided several "verbatim" from the Carter-Dayan talks.

Media now brought out a little known "diplomatic commitment" by Henry Kissinger, who it was said had promised Israel that the PLO would never be acknowledged by the U.S. until it *first* pledged to recognize Israel. Israel said there was no way that it would allow the presence of PLO at Geneva. In the meanwhile the

U.N. had already voted to allow a 15 delegate team of the PLO to attend the U.N. with PLO Foreign Minister Farouk Kaddoumi.

U.N. Secretary Kurt Waldheim continued to express his strong belief that a Geneva conference through the UN was the best structure for a Mideast peace conference. Russia had always said so. Now the U.S. had — at least officially — said that is how it should be. Carter and Vance had strongly expressed their opinion that Kissinger's "step-by-step" diplomacy was a mistake.

From the Israelis stand point any Geneva conference, under the aegis of the U. N., with both the U. S. and the U.S.S.R. present, was not at all beneficial. "Step-by-Step" as initiated by Kissinger, was ideal for Israel. It enabled the choice of which of the Arab nations it would focus on and seek agreement, and most importantly it kept the Palestinians out of the discussions. There was also much to be said for slow initiatives and delays. Boundaries had been redefined by Israeli conquests in 1948, in 1967 and in 1973 and delays of time gave such new boundaries (despite U. N. resolutions) the psychological benefit of *fait accompli*, especially if Israeli settlements had been built on the new territories. American media helped in this in many ways too. For instance, the *CBS Almanac* (1978), the annual reference manual, had shortened its outline on the creation of Israel now to the following statement: "The U. N. urged Great Britain which had mandate over the area, to divide Palestine into two independent countries. This was done, and the Republic of Israel declared its independence on May 14, 1948." Nor did media ever refer now to the Israeli promises in 1967 that it would not keep "one inch" of conquered territories\*.

"Since January, (i.e. when Carter had taken office)... the White House strategy — as Israeli supporters in the U. S. are angrily aware — has been a deliberate, escalating diplomatic offensive to nudge Israel towards negotiations that could lead to both peace and a Palestinian State in the West Bank ... there is a universal agreement that the best forum for any negotiations would be a Mideast peace conference in Geneva" said *Time* magazine (October 7, 1977).

In the end, the Geneva conference was aborted, as it had been after the 1973 War. Sadat had been suitably softened up in his many meetings with Kissinger. Ever since he stepped into the shoes of his former boss, Nasser, a hero, no less, to Egyptians and to most Arabs, Sadat had suffered greatly not only in living in Nasser's shadow throughout his life, but even more so after Nasser died.

Past losses against Israel had done nothing for his own popularity or his ego. The 1973 War had provided an ego boost — he could even claim to be the architect of the Arab creditable performance. Now, there was considerable Western media attention, at first hostile, later almost cordial when he spoke in glowing terms about "my brother Henry". He could even allow himself the luxury of talking about "my people", "my farmers", "my economy" in interviews with Western media. But in fact he had great problems at home. Coerced by international creditors to raise basic commodity prices at home, he faced riots the day rice and bread prices were to reach new heights. Sadat desperately needed an end to the huge military allocations, and felt even more the need for Western economic aid.

\* "Israel Foreswears War Of Conquest" said the headline of *The New York Times*, June 6, 1967 to assure Americans that the Israeli attack on Jordan, Egypt and other Arab lands was not for conquest. "Israel asserted today that her war aims did not include territorial conquest. Statements to this effect were made by Premier Levi Eshkol... Defense Minister Moshe Dayan and Foreign Minister Aba Eban at a news conference" added *The New York Times*.



It was in these circumstances that he made dramatic pleas for finding a solution to the Arab-Israeli hostilities, agreed to speak on the three-way international T.V. hook-up with Begin (arranged with incredible speed within hours by CBS) with CBS Walter Cronkite as the go-between from New York, and agreed, when put on a spot, to go to Jerusalem. Other Arab leaders would get furious at the "sell-out", Sadat's own ministers would object and then resign (even his Foreign Minister did) but Sadat could not back down now having made the commitment internationally, even if he wished to do so. After all, wasn't *he* Egypt?

"The U.S. Government seemed to be just bystanders" wrote *Time* magazine's Strobe Talbot regarding the Jerusalem extravaganza. In fact Carter had been scheduled to leave the U.S. for a nine-nation trip on November 22, and should have been overseas when the dramatic three-way TV talk was arranged. In a move most unusual for a President he had decided to delay the trip but for an entirely different reason. Congress was delaying on his many domestic reform proposals; signals from Capitol Hill suggested that there may be questions of clarification that might be raised regarding some of these proposals while he was away, and his absence would become a reason for further congressional delays. Carter did not want Congress to have that excuse.

In the months that followed the Jerusalem extravaganza, Sadat and then Begin both insisted that Carter should be the intermediary, a role that Carter found eventually worsened his relations with Israel.

*Time* magazine (December 5, 1977) reported that while Carter had stopped using the phrase "legitimate rights of the Palestinians" after 63 Jewish leaders had come to him following the October 1 communique, Carter even now "had not chosen to accept the standard taboo of the term. [To Carter] it was sad testimony... If he were prohibited from saying that 1) the Palestinian people did exist and 2) that they had rights."

When Carter fought and overcame strong Zionist supporters on Capitol Hill to allow the F-15 planes to Egypt and F-16s to the Saudis (the promise for these planes had in fact been made during the Ford administration) the Zionist lobby was very bitter. "What do you want to do with the Israelis, sap their vitality? Cut the legs out from under them?" asked Senator Jacob Javits in a speech.\* "Carter is not to be relied upon as far as the security of Israel is concerned" said Stanley Sheinbaum a top Democratic fund raiser. Carter's aide Mark Segal resigned after the Arab plane sale went through and soon became an outspoken critic of Carter. Schindler, Chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Jewish Organisations said the Jewish people must now have "a big question on Carter." As differences between Carter and Begin became frequent, Schindler said "Israel has a leader [Begin]... not only of Israel but of the entire Jewish people."

Both Carter and Vance voiced firm denunciation of Israel on the issue of building what they termed illegal settlements in occupied West Bank; each time Carter had

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\* James Reston of *The New York Times* was sometimes a lone voice of impartiality over the years on the Middle East, at least on occasions. Seeing Moshe Dayan, Israel's Defence Minister, breakfasting with six Senators, five of whom were members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Reston felt called upon to comment: "There was a time in this capital when a British Ambassador was recalled to London because he expressed a preference in a social gathering for one Presidential candidate over the others, but that was in the days when there were rules and even manners about what was permissible in the conduct of foreign relations."

sharp comments when Israel attacked Lebanon, Israeli leaders and their U.S. supporters responded with fiery comments about Carter. As early as March 1978, Israeli Defense Minister Weizmann told Israel newspaper "Ma'ariv" that Israel was at "the height of a confrontation with the U.S. such as Israel has never faced before". As the Israeli-Egyptian peace talks got underway, U.S.-Israeli relations worsened. Carter chastised Begin for showing him one set of proposals, getting his approval and then switching them when presenting them to Sadat with the claim that Carter had approved. There were frequent confrontations. Following Camp David both Carter and Vance agreed with Sadat that the agreement involved self-determination in five years by the Palestinians of the Left Bank. Begin and the other Israeli officials insisted that it did not. Begin then went "over the head" of Carter to the American people, via media. In fact, soon the Israeli Prime Minister had only to mention Carter's name to have the latter booed by large American crowds. Reporting on Begin's triumphant trip gathering donations for Israel across the U.S., *Time* magazine reported the astounding ovations he received; at the Los Angeles Forum, speaking to a crowd of 21,000 "whenever Jimmy Carter's name was mentioned, the crowd booed lustily". There were however, other occasions when Begin even complimented Carter. No doubt intending to heal the breach, Carter pledged "total absolute American commitment to Israel's security", whereupon Begin called Carter's comment "one of the greatest moral statements ever".

Sadat tried his own type of diplomacy at healing the various differences that arose periodically between Begin and himself. He once sent "An Open Letter to the American Jews" through an advertisement in all major U.S. newspapers, "to revive the spirit of accommodation and meaningful co-existence, and to reinforce our belief in the oneness of the human cause". It backfired; Jewish and Zionist leaders in the U.S. merely asked him to go and talk to the Israeli leaders. Robert Blumenthal, of the American Jewish Committee said "It looks like Sadat is trying to divide us".

Media helped Begin greatly when he visited, or even when he had something to say from Israel. And TV entertainment programming helped especially when there was special need. It is impossible to provide too many examples, so we might just consider some of the shows that were on commercial TV at the time of Begin's visit to the U.S. in April 1978. Was it all merely coincidental, as part of some special remembrance? Note that for this review, all news segments relating to Begin's visit and all his speeches, and all news reports on TV each day about the Middle East, have not been included in the list.

April 15 — Begin arrives in the U.S.

April 16 — In *60 Minutes* (CBS top rated newsmagazine program) Maury Shafer had a long segment on Illinois Jews gathering to remember Nazi atrocities during World War 2. Segments from this were shown all week on CBS news programs.

April 18, 19, 20, 21 — NBC had a 12 hour special *Holocaust* about Nazi atrocities on the Jews. The marathon "miseries" had extensive write-ups and film clips on all major TV stations, major newspapers, magazines. Then there was extensive coverage of "audience reaction" after the series had started, not only on NBC but on other TV stations newspapers and magazines. Later the series was shown in European cities and once again, "audience reaction" was taken and aired on American TV, by newspapers and magazines.

April 18, — the Metromedia TV network had a week-long series on Israel — "its achievements and frustrations".

April 19 — Metromedia TV special *Sealed Verdict* on Nazi crimes against the Jews.

April 12 — The top rated game show, *Hollywood Squares*, on an average had one or two questions on Jewish heritage or on the Old Testament every day. Monitored on this day, it had five .

April 15 — News segments on TV and magazines about Arab millionaires and their extravagance in poor taste — focus on El Fassey, the Arab had created a monstrous horror out of the Beverly Hills mansion he owned, coloring the genitals of the statues in his garden pink and adding plastic effects. All major media and all TV performers — from Barbara Walters to the newest rookie on local TV news teams, were to speak at length about El Fasseys lack of taste.

April 23 — On ABC's *Good Morning America*, a 90 minute show, a segment on why Nazis had massacred Jews. April 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 — ABC TV network aired the movies *Exodus* and *QB VII* (films on Jewish sufferings under the Nazis and the creation of Israel) on different time slots, in installments.

April 27 — On CBS TV news, a one-hour discussion special on how OPEC oil price hike had caused world-wide economic disasters.

These notes, it must be remembered, are only partial and only apply for just that week. Also they do not include TV News' comments, in detail (examples of which we shall look at later). TV networks gave extensive coverage to every Israeli official who wished to speak, on the "news conference" format shows with each of the three networks; Begin was usually covered on local and national news; and network evening shows allowed him as much time as he wished. On March 22, when he had criticism of Carter, his National Press Club speech was covered; an impromptu interview at the airport was covered and then each of the three TV networks gave him a half-hour "special".

In fairness it must be stated that with the atrocities that Jews had suffered especially under the Nazis, there had to be an obsessive need to remember and resolve that Jews would never again face such a fate. And that if the Arabs instead of the Jews had the power over U. S. media that the Jews had, would they not have skewed the news and attempted whenever and in whatever way they could to win sympathy for their side?

The problem, in the final analysis, for U. S. interests, was *not* who dominated or controlled media. It was that mass communication, the most powerful in the world, *was not free and objective*.

Despite major media's attitude however, Carter's views regarding the Middle East were beginning to have an effect on some segments of media; knowing that the President was not anti-Israel by any means, some Americans were also starting to see the issues with a slightly wider perspective. Some reporters were even starting to ask questions about Israel's intransigence.

A major Israeli offensive was launched into Lebanon during the week of March 22, shortly before Begin's April 15, visit. The PLO had earlier launched one of their suicide squads — Arafat was reported to have said, "There is nothing greater now than to die" — and the suicide group had died in the attempt, of course, but this time, tragically, many passengers of an Israeli bus they had commandeered had died also and others were seriously injured. At first it seemed as if the PLO had cold-bloodedly done the killing; Begin said so and American TV reported it as such but then *Time* magazine (April 3 '78) explained what happened. The PLO suicide squad had hijacked the Israeli bus, said they were carrying explosives and would hold the



passengers until PLO prisoners held by Israel were released. When the PLO took the bus, said *Time* magazine, "there was not enough time to order up special Israeli anti-terrorist squads to arrive on the scene before that fatal confrontation — perhaps the most tragic failure of all. The police commandor at the road block gave a blanket open-fire order to terrified traffic cops, and their wild fusillade when the bus was finally halted probably *killed more hostages than did the terrorists*" (*Time* April 3, '78, italics added). The bus load that the PLO held in Israel, in exchange for the safe return of the hostages had thus been exploded with the "wild fusillade" of the Israeli police.\*

The Israeli onslaught in apparent retaliation of this tragedy was one of the most furious yet. Southern Lebanese towns and villages were reduced to ghost towns with the dead, and hundreds of thousands fleeing north. Unlike previous invasions, on this occasion the Israeli's land forces did not retreat after their punishment of the Lebanese for harboring the Palestinians. This time they merely decided to stay, take over a large part of Southern Lebanon and then hand it over to Col. Huddad's band. It was now, they said "Free Lebanon" a separate state from Lebanon. The Lebanese government went through the motions of lodging complaints at the U.N..

"By midweek (fourth week of March) it was clear that the Israeli incursion while killing more than 2,000 Arab Civilians had not damaged the Palestinians Liberation Organisation's ability to wage guerilla war... Only 10 Israeli soldiers had been killed and 42 wounded in the fighting in Lebanon, as compared with an estimated 200 Palestinian commandos killed and another 200 wounded. But Israelis gradually realized that more than 2,000 Arab civilians had been killed and 265,000 had been turned into refugees fleeing to the north. In the coastal city of Sidon alone, there were 100,000 of them — packed into schools, a mosque, empty buildings and pathetic rows of tents. In Beirut hundreds of luxury apartments that stood dark and vacant since the civil war were filled with refugees" (*Time* April 3, 1978).

The numbers of killed and wounded, especially the quaint method of determining who were "PLO Commandos" killed is *Time's* own — Lebanese and foreign press provided far more devastating figures. But *Time* did report on this occasion just how the "retaliatory" action by the Israelis came about. "The Israeli drive into Lebanon was not merely a powerful gesture of revenge. It was a calculated manoeuvre to strengthen Israeli security in the north, and the PLO raid only gave Israel *the excuse* it needed to move decisively..." (Italics added).

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While Carter's views about the Middle East were creating some problems for the established Zionist image, another world renowned celebrity caused a problem on a TV show being watched by hundreds of millions in the U.S. and around the world, in the Spring of 1978. It happened at the "live" presentation of the Academy Awards.

\* In that same issue, *Time* also decided to cover some of the reports of extreme cruelty and torture in the West Bank. "Perhaps the worst incident occurred at Biet Jala (pop. 8,200) five miles south of Jerusalem. One day last week residents reported about 50 Israeli troops rolled up in trucks and surrounded an Arab school... the troops ordered the pupils, all in their early teens, to close their windows, then hurled beer-can-size cannisters of U.S. made CS anti-riot gas into the packed classrooms" (*Time* April 3, '78).

Since these Awards ceremonies were among the highest rated (most watched) and because they were aired "live" (and therefore without any opportunity to do any editing) Vanessa Redgrave's denunciation of "Zionist hoodlums" reached the length and breadth of America and several foreign countries quite unexpectedly. As Begin often said, "Atmosphere is very important" and it was "atmosphere" that was now tarnished.

Vanessa Redgrave, the British movie star, had been nominated for an Oscar for her performance in "Julia". A political activist in her native Britain, she had for years espoused many "people" causes, including battles against prejudice towards Jews. But she had espoused the Palestinian cause quite strongly. Her nomination for Oscar would normally have run into great difficulty therefore, except that the current trends of partial disagreement with Israeli policies caused the Zionist opposition to be somewhat half-hearted. However, several Zionist groups had strongly objected to her nomination and some, like the Jewish Defense League, aside from making threats on her life, had conducted a week-long demonstration wherever she went, with their standard slogans and chants.

These demonstrators had gathered outside the Los Angeles auditorium on the Awards night (April 3, '78) and were particularly loud and insulting. In her acceptance speech at the Oscars, she referred to them as "Zionist hoodlums". Harriet Van Horne, the syndicated columnist's coverage perhaps best describes what happened. "Vanessa Redgrave humbly thanked 'my dear colleagues'. A picture of serene and loving grace she was. Then she took a deep breath and tore into the 'Zionist hoodlums' ... Hollywood's elite all starched and jewelled, responded in the manner of ordinary mugs at a prizefight. There were 'boos' and cries of 'sit down'. Undaunted Miss Redgrave went on to offer us all felicitations for having triumphed over anti-Semitism, Nazism, Sen. Joe McCarthy and Richard Nixon...It was Paddy Chayefsky who came through with the punch. Stumbling over his words he condemned 'those persons' who come to the Oscar rites to 'propagate their propaganda'. In Chayefsky's view a simple 'thank you' would have been enough. The applause [to Chayefsky] was a 21 gun salute" (*N.Y. Post* April 4, 1978).

The Redgrave outburst posed some problems for the Zionists. On the one hand the airwaves worldwide had been used for the outburst against "Zionist hoodlums". Vanessa Redgrave was no Arab who could be ridiculed. Not only was she a very prominent movie star, she had an air of gentle, good breeding about her despite her radical views and activism. How does one handle such an image? And, importantly, was it a good idea to come out with fire and brimstone, thereby expanding public awareness?

TV of course covered the incident in news, but with the least amount of fanfare. Local newscasters (especially in areas like New York) could afford some caustic and biting statements but not nationally. Rona Barret, the celebrated Hollywood gossip columnist (on ABC's *Good Morning America*), said she was shocked by such behavior by Redgrave. The editors of 'Page Six', a daily column in the *New York Post* said (April 4), "If Vanessa Redgrave was a drinking woman, she could blame it all today on booze. But the fact that everyone in the entertaining establishment wants to lynch her doesn't faze Vanessa one bit. Early today, the British Oscar winner told Page Six: 'you people ran the first story about my Palestinian attitude and I guess you'll run the last. I am proud of what I said last night. I had a world forum for saying it and I don't retract a word!'. Chayefsky said, "She is a Bolshevik (expletive)". Alan King said, "I am that Zionist hoodlum she was talking about. It's just a pity I wasn't

on the platform tonight, I would have gone for the jugular". Lester Persky, producer of her new film, said he thought of firing her.

Despite the anger and the claim that she had attacked all Zionists (and therefore, presumably, all Jews) just what had she said? The following are her actual words. Addressing the gathering, she said, "You should be very proud that in the last few weeks you stood firm and refused to be intimidated by the threats of a small bunch of hoodlums whose behavior is an insult to the stature of Jews all over the world, and to their great and heroic struggle against Fascism and oppression. I salute that record, and I salute all of you for having stood firm and dealt the final blow against that period when Nixon and McCarthy launched a world-wide witch-hunt against those who tried to express in their lives and in their work, the truths that they believed in". Then holding her Oscar aloft, she said, "I salute you and I thank you and I pledge to you that I'll continue to fight against anti-Semitism and Fascism". (*New York Times*, April 4, 1978).

This then was the speech that caused all the furor. It must be noted that she spoke in glowing terms about Jews, and thanked the Academy for not being frightened by those extremists who had fought to deny her the Oscar. She had called that bunch hoodlums.

The main Zionist retaliation was provided on TV. Two celebrities were used. One was Joey Adams. He was called "America's goodwill ambassador" by TV. He appeared on *The Stanley Siegal Show* (CBS) and other talk shows in the day and evening, to tell America that Redgrave had approached him, saying she was unable to get the documentary, *The Palestinians* aired in the U.S. that it was an honest, factual film that Americans should see, and would he help? Adams said he had furiously rejected her, because he felt the film was pure propaganda, and he had gone on to warn the newspapers and other media about her intentions.

Theodore Bikel, as President of Actors Equity in the U.S., had also blasted her because he said the documentary had mentions of the "liquidation" of Israel. (Redgrave had filed an action against Bikel because she said, the film said no such thing.) "Vanessa wants the destruction of Israel", said Joey Adams on *The Stanley Siegal Show*. But the master stroke — and good fortune (for Zionist cause) — was none other than Vanessa's own younger sister, Lynn Redgrave. Lynn had become a well-known movie star after "Georgie Girl" but had faded into nondescript roles and performances after that; the best she could get after was the role of the real-life prostitute in *The Happy Hooker*. Now presumably settled in the U.S., and seeking a resurgence of her faltering career, she was on TV only occasionally as a guest, mainly on game shows.

Evidently she had immediately chosen to disassociate herself from her sister, after the Oscar speech. "The rumors spread that Lynn would not invite Vanessa to any party they (Lynn and husband) gave, fearing Vanessa would ask for a contribution to one of her 'causes'." whispered Earl Wilson (*N.Y. Post*, April 4) "That's probably true", John Clark (Lynn's husband) reportedly said. "Lynn thinks she's silly for doing it."

Lynn Redgrave was then suddenly on several talk shows, starting from the morning. *The Stanley Siegal Show* (CBS), to *Good Morning, America* (ABC) to *Today* (NBC). She evidently came well prepared because her words seldom varied. "Vanessa has more love for people groups than for her children," said Lynn. She acknowledged that Vanessa had helped her a lot in her career, but she stressed that she herself was a Capitalist while Vanessa and their brother were Socialists. She



stressed that she did love her sister, but she totally disagreed with her about her crazy radical views. Lynn was to become very popular with the media and the entertainment business thereafter. She quickly got roles in TV programs and soon not one but two series of her own, one following the other.

It was ironical that Chayefsky, who had in anger — and clearly without time to reflect and write his words — not been a very able foil. As a man with talent and considerable experience as a writer Chayefsky had some big movie hits to his credit, including the recent controversial movie *Network*. In this, as in other movies, Chayefsky seemingly espoused radical 'youth' attitudes, but very adroitly moved the main message to something very different from what most movie-goers consciously thought he was saying. Recent controversial TV shows and movies abounded with such expert twists, where the real *lasting* message was different from the viewpoint seemingly expressed. We might briefly consider a couple of examples for Chayefsky's own scripts.

*Network* at first glance, for instance, seemed a daring and rare denunciation of commercial TV. But it was not. The plot was simple and had a much more important "message" for the viewer. It is all about an elderly newscaster, about to be put away, who goes "mad", believes himself inspired by God, and urges audiences to revolt and scream from their windows, "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore". He is sacked for this but brought back when it is found that people have been turned on and the ratings had soared. There are the money-hungry "bad guys" (one is a girl executive) and there are the not-so-bad guys. At a high point, the network boss barks at the "mad man" that there are no nations, no East, no West, no America, no Democracy any more, just the Almighty Dollar and the Multinationals. The network conglomerate has been sold to Arabs.

The "mad" newscaster is finally killed in a bizarre plot by a paid terrorist, a Black Muslim called Ahmed Khan. So there we have it. *Network* was "controversial" because it talked a lot about how TV networks have ways to increase ratings. The fact is that everyone (even the public) really knew that by now. But what the movie really leaves the viewer with is the fright that the Arabs and the Multinationals (oil, of course) can take away American institutions, even the much loved telecommunications networks, and thereby destroy civilization with their propaganda. In the final analysis then, *Network* did really no damage to the real-world American TV networks at all (it was later to be shown on TV, no doubt as an example of how free of censorship the networks are). The newscaster and his outlandish situations were in fact too unrealistic to be related to the real world of "everybody's uncles" of CBS, NBC and ABC and so the movie story was to be seen as a fantasy. What did remain with the viewer was the terror of Arab taker-over — a fear that caused audiences, even when aware of Zionist control of the medium, to feel relieved. At least under Zionists, Democracy and the American Way was safe. When it came to Big Business Bad Guys, it was those multinationals involved with Arabs.

Chayefsky's messages could take other forms such as upholding Establishment material values in a setting very *au courant*, very upbeat. In *Hospital* another well-produced and successful movie, denunciation of uncaring medical staff comes up for criticism with lots of humor in a decidedly "contemporary values" setting of 1971. But from her descriptions, the girl and her father who are "dropouts" seem clearly to be having a drab and — to the viewer — boring life at the Indian reservations. For good measure there is the sequence of the very sick father having an Indian witch doctor do his wild dance in a modern hospital. On the other hand, there is the

pragmatic, dedicated "Establishment" doctor who was unconventional and individualist by nature (clearly loveable even by youth). And at a high point in the movie he delivers his message to the audience through the girl. "My son preached universal love," he thunders at her, "but he hated those around him. He despised our bourgeois values, our middle class standards. He deplored racism, exploitation of the poor, he despised my mother because she had pride in her son, the doctor. He didn't even come for her funeral because the rabbi was hypocritical. I took him by the ponches and dragged him across our seven room deplorably luxurious apartment and threw him out". Some important points were made — aided greatly by George C. Scott's histrionic talents — in this speech. One that those who have "universal love" and concerns are generally mean to their nearest and dearest (strangely rather close to what Lynn Redgrave kept repeating in her hop around TV talk shows); two, that they can be contemptably cruel through some foolish idea of what is hypocritical. Three, that this idealistic son had to be thrown out of the luxurious seven room apartment (did that include living room, dining room? how many bathrooms were there?); it meant that this idealist might deplore material values but had to be thrown out to cease enjoying them. The theme was to be found increasingly in movies as youth was drawn back into the fold and eventually to become part of "conservative" values. It was used even more frequently on TV (even *Maud*, it will be recalled, had an idealist nephew who was then found to have abandoned a pregnant girlfriend). TV writers of course did not need to be subtle or even clever. They did not have the time — even if they could have found the talent. By the mid 1970's TV had established with many plots that the most suspicious of all were the idealists and those who claimed to have principles that money could *not* buy. Gag writers used these situations until they became cliches. There were dozens of angles each with a dozen variations involved with the belief that "everyone has a price". Example of one of scores of variations: A French artist is asked by a nervous American to copy a picture post card for a price. The artist with fury and great pride goes into a tirade about the artistic expression, and showers contempt on the boor who insults him by expecting him to stoop to sacrifice his art for mere money. The timid man pleads, the artist grows angrier as the price is raised. ("How dare you think you can bribe me?"). After a few exchanges the timid man offers a large sum. The artist with tongue hanging out offers not only to do the copy but to lick the customer's feet.

It might not be too much to say that by now there was at least one joke every night of the year (and often more than one) on just this "everyone has a price" routine. A public trained with these "experiences" every night of the week, over several years, was a public that was quite willing to believe that when a President of the United States claims to be moral and idealistic, he has to have an angle, and a price. He could even be less trustworthy and certainly harder to understand than the recent Presidents who were openly avaricious and power-hungry. Importantly, could a moral man who were openly avaricious and power-hungry. Importantly, could a moral man practice cunning? And if he did not, surely others could play him for a sucker? By now it had become something of a truism. All morally principled men and women were not just dull; they could be hypocrites usually, could have an angle, a price, and if they did not, they were stupid. They could be taken advantage of. Print media had carried a story about Begin's alleged remarks about Carter, to his fellow Israeli officials. "At least one Israeli has listened to Begin dismiss Carter as a naive, none-too-bright, Jimmy-come-lately who can easily be manipulated" (*Time*, Feb 20, '78).

There was then, this extraordinary, almost ludicrous dichotomy, within

American minds in 1978. On the one hand, there seemed to be an epidemic of a "return to religion". Evangelists attracted, by far, the largest attendance, in history. Just about everywhere one looked, one saw a "born again" Christian.

On the other hand, more than ever before — certainly far more than the turbulent late 1960's, morality was scoffed at, suspect, an impediment; Americans, in the Watergate era, had screamed for morality in Washington leadership. Now it was a disqualification.

The attitude of media's elite journalists towards Carter's morality was perhaps best summed up in one column of *Time's* Hugh Sidey's own opinion: "Carter has enlarged his own problem. He is uncomfortable with bigness and complexity. He is suspicious of wealth and achievement, way of tradition, protocol and many of the rituals of advanced urban society... Unwary politicians have been known to be seized by a malady normally found among spiritual leaders. In their relentless pursuit of evil, the lonely champions who bring enlightenment sometimes convince themselves that the more they suffer, the better they are. In recent months, time and time again, Carter has pointed out that his decline in the polls has been due to his determination to do what others would not do, to be right when others are wrong. In the pulpit or during pursuit of the clearly identifiable philistines of exorbitant indulgence, such an approach to leadership may be effective. But the recent records suggest that it can be an extremely hazardous way to run a republic that has brought the vast majority of its people undreamed-of-wealth, *poise and awareness*". (Italics added).

Many of TV and print's elite journalists now attributed Carter's sharp and continuing decline at least by inference to his morality, on his insistence on pursuing unpopular causes. In this of course their views of what a leader in a democracy should be differed diametrically from the views of thinkers, from Edmund Burke and some of the founding fathers on down. But that did not seem to bother anyone. Kissinger had said on NBC TV that Carter's morality did not belong in foreign policy. Later Nixon was to confirm that.\* These were expert opinions that mattered.

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Carter displayed remarkable tenacity in the Spring of 1978. Despite media's criticism (mild as yet compared to what it would become), he seemed able and determined to overcome congressional obstacles to legislation that he believed were right, even though Power Cartel pressures were furiously pitched against him; it all involved the sale of arms to Turkey, to Saudi Arabia and nationalizing the Panama Canal.

The arms embargo on Turkey had been placed by Nixon during the Cyprus Civil War; Turkish armed forces had moved in for what they insisted was the defense of the Turkish Cypriots who they claimed were being exterminated by Greek Cypriots. Turkey bought arms from the U.S.. The U.S. now said that Turkey had used U.S. arms in aggression and so a ban had been imposed by Nixon, on future arms sales to Turkey. No one presumably considered the double standard. Even as the Senate Foreign Relations Committee rejected the President's proposal to lift the four year old ban, by saying the supplied arms should not be used for offensive purposes, Israel was

\* In 1979, Nixon was to criticize Carter for trying to practice the "Golden Rule" in foreign policy. The Golden Rule, said Nixon, is for personal matters only.



pounding away with the U.S. planes, bombs and other equipment in another of its massive attacks on Lebanon. Despite their rejection by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee however, the White House was able to overcome the opposition eventually, by making the Congressmen realise that Turkey was now ready to break off totally with the U.S., that it had already served notice that it would remove the U.S. bases that were critical to monitor the Soviet border. Carter also emphasized to Congress that Turkey was a member of NATO and CENTO.

The F-15 planes sale to Saudi Arabia (already approved by the Ford administration) was now being strongly opposed in Congress. Carter managed to overcome that fierce opposition too, though not without bloodshed.

By the fall of 1977 another important foreign policy issue was surfacing to the headlines. Opposition to the signing of a Panama Canal Treaty was high and mounting under powerful rhetoric of the opposition, led by Ronald Reagan and Senator Goldwater who both called it a "giveaway". "We paid for it, we own it and we will keep it" was how Reagan's speechwriter worded it and audiences, deeply moved, agreed. The American public knew little or nothing about the facts behind the acquisition of that Canal by the U.S. but the general idea was clear: the U.S. owned the Canal, Carter wanted to give it away, the Reagan/Goldwater opposition did not want it given away because we paid for it, we own it.

In the meanwhile, the growing anger, impatience and riots in Panama against the U.S. delays in settling Panama's ownership of the canal, were reaching dangerous levels. Panamanian strongman, Brigadier-General Omar Torrijos, highly loved and respected in Panama, was attempting to calm the Panamanian public. Carter's morality, seen as such a hindrance at home and by the Israelis, was performing a remarkably soothing effect in many parts of the Third World, and causing a significantly favorable shift in the U.S.'s image even in Latin America. In a *Time* magazine interview, (*Time*, August 22, 1977) Torrijos had said, "I know that President Carter now has a difficult mission, but I am confident that the moral force of what is right will prevail. When your people are informed of the truth, they will come to know the injustice that was done here some 70 years ago". (Torrijos would die in a plane crash a few years later.)

The problem, however, was that people did not generally know. Television talked a lot about the issue, but not about how the U.S. had acquired control of the Panama Canal "some 70 years ago". Even in those heydays of colonial expansion U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt had been criticized by the more principled elements within the U.S. for this "acquisition". "From the beginning to the end, our course was straightforward and in absolute accord with the highest standards of international morality" said Roosevelt in his autobiography. Not true. In *The Path between the Seas* David McCullough provides the facts. A French company headed by Ferdinand de Lesseps had started to build the Panama Canal, attempting to duplicate their other engineering feat, the Suez Canal. But major problems, including diseases from the swamplands, landed the company in bankruptcy. Bunua-Varilla, an adventurer, had acquired disposition rights and he now approached the U.S. to sell the French rights. The U.S. soon saw great values in the purchase. President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Hay approached Columbia (Panama was a part of Columbia) with the offer of \$10,000,000 in gold and an annual rent of \$250,000 to acquire local rights while Columbia would continue to retain sovereignty over the Canal. But Columbia refused the offer.

So the U.S., now very eager on the scheme, decided to encourage that portion of

Columbia on which the proposed canal was being built, to revolt against the State of Columbia. In itself, this act was a violation of a 1848 agreement, but it was only the start. A certain Dr. Manuel Amador (described by contemporaries as a "frail, bespectacled man") was selected to become the leader of the revolution. He was apparently briefed in New York, promised \$10,000 for bribes to co-operative Columbian troops and provided with a makeshift flag from material bought at Macy's Department Store to serve as a revolutionary flag. From Columbia, Amador wired that a steamship was needed to launch the revolution, so the U.S. *Nashville* was sent by Washington. The adventurer, Bunua-Varilla, was being used as Washington's agent and concurrently "Panama's representative". As soon as the *Nashville* reached its destination, the revolution was triggered. The new Panamanian State's representative was soon due in Washington to work out the deal on the Panama Canal. So Bunua-Varilla told U.S. Secretary of State Hays "As long as the (Panamanian) delegation has not arrived in Washington, I shall be free to deal with you alone (i.e. on Panama's behalf). When they arrive, I shall no longer be alone. In fact, I may not perhaps be here at all."\* The treaty was therefore rushed through and finalized May 18, 1903 while the Panamanian delegation was still at sea! "The treaty now did not even have the American-proposed 100 year lease; it made the canal U.S. property for all times" writes Mr. David McCullough.

The size of the canal was also expanded by the "treaty" from its original six miles to ten miles, and the U.S. was given "all rights, power and authority" as sovereign. The canal work was soon resumed, yellow fever and malaria finally overcome and it was ready in 1914 just as World War I commenced.

The treaty that Carter now wanted to sign with the Panamians comprised two complex legal documents, through which the canal was not to be "given" to the Panamanians. The latter would acquire sovereignty over it in 2000 A. D. but the U.S. would continue to have not only priority rights in use but also proprietary rights in its defense at its terms. When such "defense" was needed was also to be determined by the U.S..

The treaty was finally forced through by Carter despite the heavy opposition. Little by little, some of the facts regarding the treaty condition were communicated by the Carter Administration to the American public, and the powerful public opposition slowly withered. In Congress, the ratification cost Carter some concessions in "deals". Even Senator Howard Baker, the Republican leader, agreed to vote for the treaty, it was reported, after Carter had agreed not to veto a major hydraulic project for Tennessee (Baker's home state).

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Carter was now to commence his delayed nine-nation trip in January '78.

TV and print media raised cynical questions about the need for the trip; TV experts asked each other why the selection for those countries and confessed themselves baffled (thereby establishing concern among the public). CBS even worked out how much the trip was going to cost the taxpayers. Yet at the end of the trip, media had to concede that it had uplifted American image considerably.

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\* See *The Path between the Seas* by David McCullough for more details.

About this time, the loyalty of some Carter aides was beginning to seem dubious. Eventually, Carter would have to take the unprecedented step of sacking his entire Cabinet, in addition to letting some other aides go, by which time, his appointees, like Energy "czar" Alfred Kahn and — during the oil hysteria of 1979 — Secretary of Energy Schlesinger were providing, intentionally or otherwise, comfort to his political adversaries.

During the Arab F-16 planes sales arguments between Carter and pro-Zionist politicians, a Carter aide had resigned, then spoken out against him. Now, during the Carter's overseas trip in January 1978, there was a curious development in Poland.

At the Carter-Ford debates, Ford's *faux-pas* regarding Poland had done much to damage his chances; for that reason alone, it would have seemed essential for Carter (for political reasons) to do well in Poland. More important, Poland was ruled by a communist regime and it was critical that an American President do well there, with great care in planning and management. Carter did do very well — he dared to hold a press conference of foreign and American journalists, allowing any questions to be put to him. The fact that an American President would be willing to subject himself to such a vulnerable position was itself most impressive to the world press and the fact that it was on Polish TV as well, no doubt made very important points with the Polish people themselves about a free society and its President.

In these circumstances, it was remarkable that for the visit of the President of the U.S. to a communist country, the translator of the President's words (employed by the U.S.) would be a freelance interpreter. Steven Seymour of New York was apparently hired on a daily basis just for the Poland trip. Why was there not a regular interpreter in the U.S., a country heavy with Americans of Polish descent, for the President's visit? Would not the Intelligence Service with their year-round surveillance of communist countries have an army of Polish experts? Seymour caused considerable merriment among the Poles at the President's expense by his strange translations of Carter's words (the translations followed each sentence as Carter spoke) "When Carter said he had come to learn about the Polish people's desires for the future, the translator used a Polish word meaning sexual desire. When the President said he had left the United States that morning, the interpreter used a word meaning that he had abandoned the U.S. forever. Carter's praise of the Poles' much revered Constitution of May 3, 1791 came across as if he were holding it up to ridicule" *Time* stated. Despite it all, Carter's visit to Poland was reported upon favorably by the world press, especially the remarkable no-holds-barred news conference (at which U.S. reporters were particularly rough) which impressed even Polish authorities. No doubt they had put it on TV expecting the U.S. President not to do well.

In India, another unusual occurrence: a mike left on while Carter spoke in confidence to Vance, allowed the roomful of Indian officials including the Prime Minister to hear that the U.S. President intended to have the Secretary of State write a strong note to India about nuclear research. The embarrassment was nullified however, when despite the provocative questioning by reporters, the Indian Prime Minister insisted he had not been angered. In India, Carter was again hailed with great enthusiasm and evident popularity. But a fly that came on the banquet table caught U.S. media's fancy so much that not only was it commented on by just about every TV and print journalist in the U.S. press contingent but also on CBS's *In the News* a two minute current affairs news update for children; the show was claimed to provide basic political and social knowledge to children, yet in its reference to the President's trip abroad, *In the News* centered on the fly that came on the banqueting



table in New Delhi.

At the end of Carter's first year as President, TV experts gravely concluded that his administration had been a failure in many ways, so far. Not much had been achieved, they said, in controlling inflation; there was no energy policy, none of the major reforms promised by the President had come about. In foreign policy too, there were problems with the Russians, in the Mideast. Panel discussions of experts came up with the same conclusions, as did major print media. And of course, the opinion of these media industry leaders was carried by the small fry and the conglomerate newspapers around the country. As the Ralph Nader studies had shown less than 1% of the nation's media had representatives in Washington; 70% of the nation's newspapers were not locally owned, but part of conglomerates; the rest usually picked up reports and syndicated columns with which their own editorial policy agreed. It also made some columnists so popular and in such prolific syndication. "After a disappointing first year, his [Carter's] ability to inspire the nation was in doubt and his popularity was continuing to slide at the polls" said *Time* (Jan. 30, '78).

In this period, the sequence on network TV's evening news seldom varied, except when some major event occurred. Consider for instance, *CBS Evening News*, with everybody's uncle Walter Cronkite, the most watched news of the three. On an average day, Cronkite, (always seated behind his stage desk) would start in his quiet impersonal voice, with some ominous statement (dollar declined: cost of living figure released; trade deficit; price of oil etc.). He would then add something like "The Carter Administration was heavily criticized by — (Republican leadership, or individual Labor Leader or Business Leader) for failing to perform with the necessary leadership (cut to filmed interviews). An administration spokesman (may be named) said this was (whatever explanation). The stock market reacted to (falling dollar, trade deficit, some new government regulation) and dropped points in light/heavy trading" (sometimes a cut to a filmed interview with economic expert or stock exchange brokerage rep, who would fault the Carter administration for lack of direction): "Business was confused with Administration policies." The dramatic impact of these sentences was enhanced usually by a long shot of Cronkite at his desk, surrounded by assistants, who provided the newsroom 'atmosphere' (they never did anything, except walk occasionally in the background) and then a slow fade into a series of advertising commercials. In the next segment there would be some international news (if it was major it of course preceded the bad news on the economy; anything about the Mideast quickly implied White House mishandling).

The 'economy' news format varied so little on a normal day, that it was usually possible to tell what the next item would be. And predictably, the family sitting down to meats and salads, listening vaguely to all this, got the message: inflation was not in control, the dollar was falling, as was the stock market ( if it rose there was some reason such as some ease-up by government on some regulations, prime interest rate, etc.) and the "Carter Administration" was unsure, confused and lagging behind in proper actions. Congressional delays in implementing legislature hardly ever received mention in the evening news.

Studies by psychologists into the impact of TV were now either very scarce or unreported. There was one by a Dr. Peter Crown in which he found that while TV watching caused the analytical part of the brain to be numbed, it was possible to snap out of that condition. Another study was reported. Dr. Edward Schaefer (of the University of California) conducted it for a different reason — to develop a better method of testing effectiveness of TV programming. The brain activity did

change when watching an interesting versus an uninteresting program. He had developed a method — to sell to the TV networks and A.C. Neilson Company — whereby instead of the standard ways to test program appeal to audiences (which we have briefly covered earlier), electrodes from computerised recording devices could be pasted to the viewer's scalp, from which a reading allowed the researcher to draw direct knowledge rather than rely merely on the respondent's verbalized or written comments.

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Polls were now very big with media. Everyone had them conducted. *New York Times* and CBS had their polls conducted, appropriately, in partnership; NBC combined with Associated Press, the world-wide U.S. news service. ABC hired Lou Harris, later combined with *The Washington Post*; *Time* hired Daniel Yankelovich, and so on.

Some no doubt drew valid conclusions, such as that reporting the public's apparent disinterest in conserving energy, despite Carter's pleas.\* Yet these polls often continued to have serious defects in design, in wording of questions and forced conclusions. With the lessons learnt of past criticism, TV anchormen and print writers told you now about the impressive sample size, the random sampling and the statistical reliability (this was new; hitherto, no one on media thought they should inform the public that a sample was, by definition, not 100% reliable). But then they would go on, with confidence, to analyse the results in terms of upper income, education and so on. This in fact *reduces* the statistical reliability of the numbers. The CBS-Times poll had a 1,500 national sample, with a 3% error factor, but the results were analysed often in sub-groups, and conclusions reached (i.e. Democrats, those who had voted for Carter, those of one educational or income level vs another); the fact is that in these small sub-groups that 3% error can be 7-10% error and more. Importantly, when questions were put about the economy or housing or welfare or social services, results were often analysed overall and among blacks. Yet when questions were put on the Mideast, Jewish respondents were never analysed separately (until professional criticism built up and two studies did towards the end of 1978), nor were we told of their strength in the sample composition; how many sampling points there were in areas like New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami, Las Vegas. And then, there were the structure and sequence of questions. In April 1978, the CBS and New York Times poll asked the following remarkable question: "Some people think the U.S. should pay more attention to the *demands* of the Arabs

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\* One might suppose that, at least in part, this cynicism regarding the need to conserve energy was due to what was now finally surfacing from the exploitations by the oil companies during the Nixon-Ford era. Now the mammoth scandal of switching "old" and "new" oil by Houston oil combines (to get the best profits from Nixon's two-tier regulation) was being uncovered; it showed that these combines had overcharged by as much as \$30 billion; additionally Carter's Justice Dept. would soon charge the top oil companies with fraudulent overcharging of consumers after the OPEC price hike (increasing prices before OPEC oil cost more) by over \$2 billion (to be settled for \$1 billion). Subconsciously, the public no doubt felt that the oil shortage was now itself some game and ignored the President's plea to reduce energy use.

even if it means *antagonizing* Israel, while others people think the U.S. should give its *strongest* support to Israel even if it means risking an Arab oil boycott. If these were the two choices, what should the U.S. do — pay more attention to the *demands* of the Arabs or give our *strongest* support to Israel?”. To go into all the various defects in that one question from the standpoint of basic research do’s and don’ts would take too long; only one aspect need be considered. Does not the question sound as if the respondent was being asked if he or she is willing to pay blackmail ransom? Does it not pre-suppose (and insist that the respondent pre-suppose) that *morally*, Israel is in the right? Does it not assume that it is impossible to support Israel *and* accede to some of the Arab claims? What impact would this have, among several other biasing factors, on the response?

Network Television news (usually watched by 75% of American homes) in the meanwhile continued its standard format and sequence of news on the economy. Each drop on the Stock Market, each increase in inflation or prime rate was accompanied by a comment of great concern by a Wall St. broker or a business leader; the TV anchormen would then turn to the camera and either repeat what a White House spokesman had to say in answer to the latest bad economic news and then report what a Republican leader had said in condemnation of Carter and his policies. Sometimes Kissinger would be produced to criticize Carter, sometimes Ford, and increasingly, Reagan’s acid comments. Then a slow fade of the camera to a set of commercials before the next segment.

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Periodically, the attacks by media on Carter and the twisted interpretations of news drew protests from the White House Press Secretary, Jody Powell. Carter himself continued to claim that the press’s freedom was important, but as Powell had said in October 1977 the practice of slanting news, criticism of Carter, the misquoting of his statements, communicating them out of context, all had the earmarks of a deliberate campaign against Carter by many in media. Such complaints were not only brushed aside by media but usually joked about among themselves, on and off the air. For instance, Hugh Sidey *Time* magazine’s Washington Editor commenting on the White House protests (*Time* Oct. 31, 1977) said, “The White House underlings .... complain that Carter’s words are being unfairly edited, that Henry Kissinger is being excessively venerated, that the Georgia boys are being called a bunch of yahoos”. Sidey then went on to joke about yahoos.

A “Get-Carter” campaign, and soon an ABC (Anyone But Carter) campaign involving highly influential forces in show business was on its way, in Hollywood and New York; very rich movie and TV celebrities had reason to despise Carter, especially his Tax Reform obsession, and his Middle East stance.

Criticism was strongly reinforced in TV programming. Stand-up comics specialized in two themes now — jokes about the Arabs and jokes about Carter. From Johnny Carson (the favorite of TV late night audiences) to the latest rookie on a daytime talk show, they all made jokes about Carter and the Arabs.

Carter’s name would be thrown into TV scripts in passing contemptuous reference or in specific political context. The attacks grew more — as in TV news — when there was one of the periodic confrontations or heated exchanges between Carter



and Begin. By April 1978, this was to reach new heights, as U.S. Administration and Israeli relations were at their worst. Even his Panama Canal Treaty was given a blast in a segment of ABC's *Carter Country* (meaning a Southern small town) a successful weekly comedy series. On the July 4, 1978 segment in this series after disparaging references to "that peanut farmer in the White House" one of the leading characters said "President Carter is not going to listen. He just gave away a whole canal — and it was all paid for" (loud canned applause).

Not all of media was on a "Get-Carter" spree. Harry Grunwald, who might otherwise have been politically or even ideologically opposed to Carter, wrote a piece in *Time* (May 15, '78) that was an excellent example of true American journalism.

"... there is too little recognition that much of the fault [for the country's problems] lies with the rest of us — meaning the country and the Congress. Carter faces an unique situation that would have sorely tried any other President ... We should at least be aware of the magnitude of what we are asking him and of our own complicities in his failure. We ask the President to break the deadlocks, to rally support for his programs (at least for the programs we like) .... If chauvinists got as far as they did in trying to defeat the Panama Canal treaties, we blame Carter ... If the Midwestern growers or the Western truck farmers are unhappy, we blame him... If the Congress acts with the independence many have urged on it, we blame him... if carried too far, such reasoning becomes circular and self-destructive. *It exempts both the people and their representatives from the responsibility of using their minds, indeed from the responsibility of collaborating in the democratic process.* It means the elevation (or the lowering) of the presidency to a kind of magical dictatorship, where *everything* is the President's responsibility. This is often accompanied by a terrible kind of impatience, almost a sort of hysteria, where every problem, every mistake or seeming mistake, becomes part of a self-reinforcing pattern of disaster. When Carter puts huge, long-range problems on the agenda — shrinking Big Government, Civil Service reform — we say he overpromises ... or that he is unrealistic without conceding that in our system such problems may take a generation to solve or even to ameliorate but that *someone must make a start.*" (Italics added)

"We are entitled to judge Carter quite severely... The danger is not so much that we will "destroy" our Presidents, but that we will destroy ourselves, as citizens, by piling on our leaders all our own wants, desires, faults and contradictions ...."

In May 1978, the White House correspondents (journalists) held their annual dinner. Traditionally, the President is invited and he attends. But this year, for the first time in 64 years, neither the President, his wife nor the Vice President attended.

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*Time* magazine itself had begun early to blame Carter for the economy, and periodically quoted Big Business leaders and economists to support that view. In its October 31, 1978 issue, William Butcher, Chase Manhattan Bank President, was quoted by *Time* as saying, "Frankly, many companies just don't know whether to go forward with capital expansion plans because they have no clear signals from Washington." "They [corporations] are waiting to see what happens to the energy program, what happens to taxes," said the Bank of America Corporation official. Other business leaders were quoted as being critical of Carter's outspoken criticism of

the oil industry. "There is no question that doubts about the President's economic policies have increased the reluctance to invest" *Time* added.

It is important that we take a quick look at the real economic picture, by mid-1978 to understand just what was happening. The reality was this: Compared to 1975, the Industrial output, as of June 1978 had improved 30%; jobs overall had increased 12.4%; sales of major consumer items had increased sharply; domestic cars alone had increased in sales by 62.3%; *overall corporate profits had increased 63.2%* (Source: Dept. of Labor, U.S. Govt.).

Business profits, then had leaped by 63.2% but against this, *business investments had grown only 6.5%*. In other words, we were back at the usual game of blackmail that Big Business had learnt to practice for so many decades now with American Presidents. Put restrictions on us or place a new tax structure on us or give us reason to doubt your total commitment to Big Business, and we will slow down growth and frighten the public. Become a total friend, allow all the tax loopholes to stand, allow us to do what we wish, and we will not only fill your campaign funds with fortunes, but will use all our great ability to get you re-elected. That was how Big Business had worked with Nixon and indeed with friendly Presidents since the Civil War and that was how it wished to get Carter off its back.

In fairness to Big Business, it must be understood that in the world of commerce, historically, nothing else mattered except making more money. It was Big Business leaders' job to twist the arm of the Government as much as it could. But that was why the founders (at least with the aid of Amendments in 1791) had built "checks and balances" into the American system. The three independent branches of government, and the freedom of the fourth estate — media. But just as the Nixon era had highlighted the horrors of excesses that a President could commit with the use of legitimate and illegitimate powers, the Carter era was beginning to highlight the horrors of what can happen when a moral President takes office, in the midst of media and Power Cartel control. The Supreme Court was co-incidentally heavy with Nixon's "strict constructionist" appointees now, and these Justices were appointed for life. Congress and media were dominated with Power Cartel control. Carter, while possessing the constitutional powers vested in a President, could not use many of these powers without public support. And media had caused that public support to erode faster than for any President not found guilty of any crime or misdemeanor.

But at the same time, Big Business did not want Carter to get off its back in one way. Screaming for freedom on the one hand, Big Business was, on the other hand, lobbying just as fiercely for controls, more tariffs, quotas, even the banning of imports. From the steel industry to footwear, from TV sets to automobiles, Big Business wanted Carter to impose restrictions on foreign manufacture. But Carter was reluctant; he believed in free enterprise. Many in Congress were fiercely for such restrictions on foreign manufacture. Japan, in particular was singled out for attack. Japan made it hard for U.S. imports with "protectionism", they said. On the other hand, Mike Mansfield, former Senate Majority Leader, now U.S. Ambassador to Japan, was to say (on *Face the Nation*), that one important reason why even European manufactuerrrs did better than the U.S. in Japan and the Far East was because U.S. Big Business did not seem yet to know these markets and had not made enough effort to study them. (For instance, the U.S. auto makers were pushing cars at Japan without even developing a right hand drive, which the Japanese used). Yet, partnered with European countries (who were quite willing to discourage Japanese exports) pressures on Japan to reduce exports and increase imports continued to



grow.\* In 1979, 68 Congressmen would go to Japan, furious that Japan, despite so much pressure, had not been willing to increase its defense spendings. Japan argued that its Constitution — drawn up after World War 2, under American instructions — did not allow it to do so. The latest Japanese “defense” budget under continuing U.S. pressure was to be 0.5% of its GNP, woefully inadequate, said the U.S. Congressmen. The U.S. wanted Japan to spend more on arms to ease pressure on the U.S. for defense of the Far East — and, incidentally, get Japan to buy more arms from the U.S., reduce U.S. trade deficit.

Television with its close conglomerate involvement in many industries was very willing to promote the idea of placing restrictions on foreign imports. Big Business advertising stressed that it was right to buy American. Trade Unions (ironically led by the “International” Ladies Garments Manufacturers Union) revived their commercials and jingles on buying American. Television included such messages in various ways in its programming. Even the ILGMU jingle was, for instance, to be sung by no other than the stars of the highest rated TV series *Happy Days*.

On the other hand, some business leaders were arguing also that U.S. corporations’ overseas operations were not bad for American labor. Sperry-Rand’s President, for instance, said manufacturing overseas created business and work for American labor — because many parts were used that were made in the U.S.. Against that was the report from Big Business’ own *Time* magazine (October 9, 1978). Reporting on a confidential study, *Time* said, “U.S. Multinationals were producing \$200,000,000,000 worth of goods abroad. *That was nearly five times greater than total U.S. exports, and if anything, the gap has widened since.* The large American multinationals like GM, Ford, ITT, Kodak and IBM, *understandably*, do not wish to undercut their foreign operations by increasing exports of finished products from the U.S.” (italics added).

And while there were the OPEC price hikes, “that had shattered the world economy”, there were analysts and economists (seldom allowed media exposure, of course) who argued that U.S. economy had *not* suffered from the OPEC price hikes but had gained a lot. In 1978 such economists had argued that: 1) For 15 years, before 1973, U.S. share of manufactured exports in the world declined from 28% share to 19%. Now the decline had stopped and begun to grow again, reaching 20.5%; 2) The dollar’s decline of over 20% since 1971 had stopped and had regained some of its losses *after* the oil price hikes; 3) Most of the OPEC petro-dollars, especially from some countries like Iran and many of the Arab countries, flowed back into the U.S. through purchases; 4) While the U.S. economic growth rate had slumped in recent years, (being below the average of the 24-nation Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development) it had improved after 1973 to be above average.

Attorney-General Bell had strongly voiced the Carter view that shared monopolies (such as the “Seven Sisters” oil companies and the four cereal manufacturers) were destructive; Bell and Carter were against mergers and acquisitions by giants that made them monopolistic. However, there was now an epidemic of mergers and acquisitions, often “midnight mergers”, making the trail so

\* At this point Japan’s economy, strong though it was, had been reeling from the shock of the OPEC price hikes and internal corruption. The Prime Minister of Japan was later to be found guilty of accepting bribes from Lockheed Corporation. In 1977, 39,000 Japanese business houses had gone bankrupt. Contrary to popular belief, smaller exporters accounted for 70% of Japan’s exports and the average Japanese import tariff on manufactured products from abroad was 3%, whereas the U.S. applied 4% (other than autos which much more) and the E.E.C. levied 5% (excluding autos).



complicated that before the Justice Department could step in, the trail had been cooled with several complicated details. Foreign Big Business was also stepping into the American bonanza. Among the American corporations, anti-trust actions by Justice Dept., ranged from fighting the mammoth deal by United Technologists Corporation, the giant aero-space conglomerate, to acquire Babcock and Wilcox Companies, to the fight against CBS, the Television giant, to keep it from buying yet another publishing house, Fawcett Publications. CBS lost its fight, and Time (June 12, 1978) reported a CBS official complaining that President Ford's administration had approved the acquisition. "That was the Ford Justice Department and this is the Carter Justice Department." Eventually CBS won through the Courts. It got Fawcett.

By now, the intricate and complex incestuous ownership between newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, movies and publishing houses had reached a stage where it was almost impossible to unravel separate and distinct interests. They competed — but within their vast conglomerate structures were the common interests, becoming even more complex by the day. The vast empires of these newspaper and magazine giants, along with other multi-media conglomerates such as CBS, ABC, RCA, Warner Communications, Trans-America, Paramount, Gulf & Western, MCA, Coca Cola ruled America.

In the meanwhile, food prices continued to rise (beef retail prices were now expected to increase by 50% by mid 1980) and it was generally believed that the poor farmer needed to get more with inflation hitting him on all sides. The farm business however was increasingly a Big Business operation, usually a "vertical combine"; the small farmer, once the back bone of American agriculture, was now almost extinct. Some basic figures illustrate this: "By 1977 farmers received only 31% of the money spent in food stores... down from 37% in 1973... the 30% of farmers classified as medium sized or larger take no less than 90% of all cash receipts ... 6% of farmers [i.e. large corporations] take 53% of all farm cash receipts almost double those as recently as 1967" (*Time* magazine, Nov 6, '78).

Just how bad was the economy for these top corporations and their major stockholders? Even as media talked of impending recession, *The Wall Street Journal* survey of 500 top corporations was released October 30, '78. The profits of these corporations in the third quarter of 1978 had increased 23% over the same period in 1977. And while media continued — as it had in the past — to associate every decline in Stock Market prices to some move or lack of move "by the Carter administration" the Dow Jones Industrial was to climb well above 880, a remarkable rise, by the middle of 1979.

Despite the steep (13%) annual advertising rate increase by TV, even retailers were now spending more than ever on TV. In 1978, giant retailers' total spendings on TV alone was \$2,400,000,000 more than all TV advertising (national and local network and non-network) of 14 years ago.

Of course the very big conglomerates were the ones making the most out of it all. Giant conglomerates were now furiously seeking others to merge with and become even more powerful. In 1978, Senator Kennedy revealed that there were 360 such giant mergers being sought. In the May 8, 78 issue of *Fortune* magazine, article by A.F. Ehrbar explained the great interest by even foreign giants in the bonanza in the U.S. "As one of Ira Harris's European clients explained to him, 'We've got five or ten years of capitalism left and you've [i.e., U.S.] fifteen or twenty. We want to be in on those last ten years'." Of course what was meant by "capitalism" was not quite the text book definition...

Just how concentrated was the nation's wealth? A study undertaken on behalf of Senator Metcalf of Montana by Corporate Data Exchange found — as others had found before — that attempting to trace the actual ownership of giant conglomerates and their holdings was as difficult as, if not more, than trying to trace political contributions, as the Nader Group had discovered each year; but overall, they found that twelve investors showed up more than half the time as the top five shareholders in each of 122 largest corporation.

Business loudly talked about recessions, loss of faith in government by business and hard times, the public never really knew just what was happening in the business of advertising. The nation's total advertising expenditure in 1978 was to be \$44,000,000,000 another record-breaking increase of 17% over 1977. Proctor & Gamble had spent \$554,000,000 in 1978 (again it needs to be stressed that these are revealed figures by the corporations themselves; they do not include sales promotion or public relations; each of these other activities has been estimated now for Big Business to be about \$10,000,000,000 each year).

We might look at some other updated numbers to get an overall idea. The networks had increased their charges again so that now some of the leading TV programs charged up to \$250,000 per one minute of advertising; specials like the Super Bowl Football game now charged as much as \$350,000 for 30 seconds. The top 629 advertising agencies were to report their total billing in 1978 had been \$23.3 billion and their income \$3,460,000,000; this was 20% more than 1977. World billings of just the top 10 U.S. agencies around the world was \$10,176,000,000, also 20% more than in 1977; income from these world billings for the ten agencies was \$1,525,000,000 (*Advertising Age*, March 14, '79).

The 20 largest marketing research companies in the U.S. reported a total revenue of \$595,500,000 in 1978, an increase of 21% over 1977. In 1977 the increase had been 19% over 1976. In 1976 that increase had been 16% over 1975 (*Advertising Age* April 9, 1979).

In addition to the epidemic of mergers, the billionaire groups were controlling stock markets, commodities, currencies and international banking in tax-free tunnels of the Bahamas, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Panama, leaving a maze so mind-boggling that no one could even tap the complex incestuous fusions of financial wizardry.

Even as "no confidence in Carter's policies" was being aired and written about, speculators in the financial markets were making fortunes, (the amateurs were losing it) from livestock sugar, coffee to precious metals; in '79, a new wave of wild speculation would send gold and silver up another 350%.

There was a great deal of money around in speculation. The wild inflationary spiral had grown unabated because the public had been conditioned to accept it as directly caused by OPEC. It was therefore not just the oil companies or even the conglomerates in the War business alone who had profited greatly from it, but many small businesses too, even at retail levels. The rising property values enabled many homeowners to feel affluent and get into the act. It was this accidental increase in net worth (on paper at least) that was now swaying many of the American middle income towards the Op-Con. In reality, the furious inflation had moved money faster towards the very rich; as a result, for the federal government, money was "tight"; prime lending rates (to banks) continued to rise to record levels, eventually to rise as high as 19%; "mutual funds" speculative groups, offering participants as much as 12% interest, mushroomed each month.

If the Stock Markets were in the doldrums because of "lack of confidence" in the Carter administration policies, as the Cronkites of the TV world said, there should have been no real movements in prices, perhaps a constant "bear" market with a steady decline.

But that was not so. So furious was the buying and selling by speculators that a seat on the New York Stock Exchange which cost \$48,000 in 1978, would cost \$205,000 a year later. And the Wilshire 5000 Index (measuring the financial progress of more conglomerates than any other Index) was to rise from 900 in February 1979 to 1056 in August 1979, as exhilarated Big Business stopped Carter's tax reform attempts and won through to what was called Congress' "Millionaires' Relief Act".

Inflation did not fall, unemployment remained hovering around 7.5%.

Big Business had dreaded only one thing — a peoples' mass revolt against tax loopholes, aiding Carter's reform measures. But then California's Proposition 13 caused a bandwagon to roll and kill tax reform movements in Washington.

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There is no doubt that media's necessary role of an adversary towards the government is a healthy role in a democracy. But what was happening in America now was something sinister, not only due to the fact that the "Get Carter" campaign was a maligning and a destructive one, but because it was so critical, at this stage, for media to play its responsible role in the national recovery, to help eradicate corrupt practices. Media could have stood up to Carter as an adversary on issues it genuinely felt he was wrong, *in the national interest*, but the national interest was being deliberately subverted by media now in not making the people aware of the freeze that Congress had put to his proposals, the politics involved. If the people were made aware, they had the power as voters to frighten Congress away from Special Interests.

As it was, Carter was criticized daily, ridiculed by comics and game shows and talk show hosts, even by the rookie news reader on local news shows.

Criticism of a top elected official becomes, in such circumstances, a form of status symbol in media, a form of back-slapping Mutual Admiration Society, the fun and challenge of out-quipping one another. Many in media who now indulged in it had no real anti-Carter feelings, it was just something that one did, because everyone did it. It was *embarrassing* to think well of Carter.

Quickly this view was reflected among the public. In the "me-first" sophisticated era, politics was supposed to be too drab to know much about, except to repeat the latest quip against Carter. Many Americans looked for entertainment in the news program and they got it. But mixed with that entertaining ridicule of Carter, was the growing irritation with him. He was responsible for all the nation's ills — the wild inflation, the rising prime rate, the unemployment.

By now millions of the "New Values" generations were young parents, and very deeply into materialism. Women's liberation had also become associated mainly with the right to work and earn more money. Fifty-three per cent of U.S. families (30.4 million) now had at least two wage earners. The U.S. League of Savings Associations announced that 45% of all 1977 homes in the record boom of home sales had been bought by families with two or more earners. This high demand helped raise prices;



home prices shot up by the month and the average home price had nearly doubled in recent years to a record \$59,000. Just about all homes bought usually took between twenty and thirty years to pay off, and many had by then more than one mortgage. *Aside* from home mortgage payments or any other kind of payments involved in home purchase, Americans by now owed \$179,000,000,000 in "time" or installment purchases — mainly cars, home appliances. Missing any instalment payments unleashed the "collection" toughies, who threatened, then finally repossessed the items and all past payments were lost with them. The prestigious Brooklings Institute of Washington had estimated that one out of every seven Americans were either bankrupt officially or virtually bankrupt.

The American Middle income families were angry. They earned a lot more (with inflation) and often with two wage earners but seemed to have nothing left. At least on one of Carter's urgent proposals — tax reform, to close loopholes — they were in agreement. Now it seemed only the rich got off scot-free.

Americans, seeking "upward mobility" with a greater thirst than ever, goaded by commercial TV, whose "free entertainment" they watched more now with tightened purse strings than ever before, thirsted more than ever for what TV made so desirable but which they could not always have, even with instalments. Middle America watched TV, its 30 min and 60 min solutions in drama and comedy to complex problems, was even more impatient for solutions to the national problems; in the "me-first" era, they wanted their own problems solved first. Youth, along with many middle aged, sought escapism in entertainment; TV and the movies provided that too through *Wonder Woman*, *Six Million Dollar Man*, *Superman*, *The Incredible Hulk*, *Star Wars*, *Battle Star Gallactica*, *Star Trek*, and so on. The movie studios spent millions in "hype" and it paid off. Profits of \$50,000,000 for a block-buster movie were not unusual.\* Disco dancing was itself a statement of Being Somebody, a participant, an escape in the ear splitting decibel reverberation. With higher profit margins from inflation, advertisers stepped up their frequencies to entice purchases. Labor fumed and made more angry demands than ever. When forced to meet them, management compromised with wage increases, then increased the price of their products. In the polls, Carter was held responsible.

At least one of the most important objectives of the polls was to enable media to blazon forth the findings as dramatically as any yellow-tabloid. In the August wave of its monthly poll, NBC-AP results were loudly proclaimed from the early morning "Today" show onwards through the day, and thereafter the cry was taken up by various print media. Carter's popularity, said NBC's "Today" show Tom Brokow, is at an all-time low, lower than that of Nixon even among those who considered him impeachable. Brokov made quips about it, then about Carter's policies. Others did so through the day. The local evening news junior broadcasters by now felt it was expected of them, too, to have comments about Carter's inadequate presidency. And yet, if you extracted a written report from NBC on this poll, what did it show? First, that there was a 1,600 sample, but no details on how it was spread; the preamble told you "This survey included questions on President Carter, Soviet relations, the economy,

\* As part of its public relations, NASA (National Aeronautics & Space Administration) had films of space projects and the workings of space missiles, for showing to space enthusiasts. To its chagrin, however, it found that teenagers were often unwilling to believe the NASA versions — they believed the TV and movie version as the real thing.

abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment and other subjects". Such an enormous scope of study would, following the reliable, *professional* format used by large corporations (for their product image and advertising research), would be a mammoth study that could take hours in interview — and would therefore be most impractical, if not impossible; responses would be dangerous to rely on, even if one could get some respondents to sit through them; there would be many other problems (e.g. atypical sample formation among those who would agree to sit for hours to be interviewed). How then did NBC-AP do it, and do it presumably every month, if not oftener? They simplified it all. They laid no foundation, asked no open-ended questions, no probes. As large corporations who spent millions of dollars each year on consumer research knew (as indeed the TV networks researchers must or should have known themselves), one did not get reliable information unless one went through the proper probes on complex questions the correct way. Such a reliable structure would need to establish not merely agree/disagree, or good/bad/indifferent, it would have to ask, for instance, on the economy, what they felt the state of the economy was, *why* they felt it was this way, *who* did they think was primarily responsible, *why* and so on. In fact if public opinion had to be measured, it would be critical to know if the respondents even understood the basic procedure of law enactment and the presidential role in it, to establish — or at least to be able to analyse — those who did know *vs* those that did not. Polls on Carter's popularity were being fielded — collectively — in the many dozens each year; could not they afford *one* each at various predetermined periods that was genuinely reliable and elicited facts? That the public's knowledge of government and its operations were — to put it mildly — vague, had been demonstrated time and again, especially in studies (such as those conducted by Ralph Nader group) that clearly showed that most Americans did not even know the three branches of government and their roles.

The August 1978 wave of the NBC-AP Poll showed that 71% wanted a new SALT agreement (with Russia) but 69% of all the sample felt the Russians could not be trusted to hold up to their end of the agreement. Why, then, did 71% want a SALT agreement?

And finally, as regards that much-publicized screaming headline, having asked for the incumbent Carter's "job rating" and additional ratings on foreign policy, economy, energy, etc., (in other words after holding him implicitly responsible for congressional delays on the domestic matters) the poll then asked about all the other issues, then finally for an overall rating on Nixon (note the sequence). The responses were *collapsed* so that "only fair" was *forced* with "poor"; Carter was rated "fair" by 53%, Nixon by 28%. But the "poor" and "fair" percentages were totalled to give Nixon a 1% advantage. Hence the screaming headlines in print and the screaming voices on TV.

Very few of the polls were different in their approach. Did they then accurately reflect public attitude towards the President? Probably for a very short span they did not. *But after the results were announced they acted — like many Nielsen Ratings on TV programming did — as self-fulfilling prophecies.* The public, having heard the broadcasts fault their President and then learning of the continuing decline in his popularity through every medium, would be wont to side with the majority (especially if one's own direct interests were not involved in the issue). Therefore it is quite likely that after seeing the results, the public felt it was proper — even if they had at best only a vague understanding of what the problems were — to blame the President. Didn't everybody, especially their favorite TV news celebrities?

By mid-1978, Carter's favorable rating, according to some polls, had plunged to 38%. The consensus was that he was a "do-nothing" president, who had failed in foreign relations and in growing domestic problems of inflation, unemployment, energy.

Against that was the reality. Most of Carter's reform proposals on employment, income tax reform, energy, labor law reform, education, medical costs, Consumer Protection Agency, Crude Oil Tax, auto safety measures, etc. were all stalled in Congress. His proposal that all political lobbies should disclose the *source* of their contributions had been viewed with horror by many on Capitol Hill and by the most powerful lobbies themselves. That reform proposal was of course quickly killed.\*

But while he had not been successful in moving Congress on vital major matters, he had succeeded in some measures. He had arm-wrestled and won against overwhelming odds on the Panama Canal Treaty, the Saudi Jets deal, the Turkish embargo. He had won on the Civil Service reform aimed at improving the productivity of Federal employees. He had strongly backed the extension time for the Equal Rights Amendment and this had come through.

Now, he had got a Jobs Bill approved, providing 280,000 new public works jobs, a Welfare Reform bill passed, tightening eligibility; he had come down hard on medical malpractices by withholding Medicare payments in 20 states until those corruptions were ironed out.

His concern for energy and the need for major reforms — in use and in exploration — was such that he had begun his term by asking Congress for a new Department of Energy which had been approved. His extreme concern about declining standards of education prompted him to ask for an independent Department of Education. This had not been approved.

Media sometimes suggested that he was playing politics by his "do-gooder" reforms; yet the facts did not show this. He refused Labor Unions' demand for higher minimum wages, drawing their ire; he vetoed politically beneficial water projects as wasteful; he was against "homesteader" allocations of the past of vast farmlands, drawing anger from Western farmers. His Justice Department threatened to sue the state of Maine if they did not settle land claims of the Indian tribes.

*And what possible political gain could he be seeking by claiming that the Palestinians had human rights, thereby drawing disaster upon himself?*

From the start he had attacked tax loopholes as being a terrible scandal in favor of the very rich; he had opposed even the standard business entertainment deductions for executives, euphemistically called the "three martini lunch", citing the \$14,000 deduction by a surgeon to entertain other doctors on his yacht.

In the early months of his presidency, an enthusiastic Carter had whipped off a great many reform proposals to Congress for its Constitutional approval (more reform measures in first six months than any President in history); he had denounced the medical profession, his HEW had conducted studies to show the enormous "rip-off" through skyrocketing medical costs; he had chastised the law profession for its elitist tendencies, prevented a coal-miners' strike which would have crippled the nation's major industries, jawboned major industries to keep inflation down and cooperate

\* Heading the lobbyists fight against such disclosures was such significant groups as the Association of American Publishers, Maurice Rosenblatt ("free lancer") and William Timmons, the former liaison officer for the Nixon and Ford administrations, according to *Time* magazine.



with creating job openings (with Federal incentives); in strongest comments he had publicized the oil industry projects as "the greatest rip-off in history".

There was a significant example of TV's power over the hearts and minds of the American people with regard to the energy crisis. Carter from his first day in office had emphasized energy conservation, then in speech after speech. Yet there continued to be a mental block among the public for such need. As a result the U.S. was perhaps the only country in the world whose consumption and import of oil had *increased* since 1974. Then the U.S. imported about 33% of its oil needs. Now it was close to 48%.

That was not all. Significantly, they were willing to blame Carter for not having an effective energy policy (fully 71% said that in the ABC- Associated Press poll in August 1978) yet 65% in the same poll claimed *there was no serious energy crisis*.

Frustrated with media's disinclination to inform the public about the real problems in Congress, Carter had sent his own aides and Cabinet members around the nation to inform the public in town meetings about facts regarding the economic problems.

By now many other countries had worse inflation and similar discontent among the masses — the degree of discontent varied with the extent of the problem. In some, basic needs were too expensive for the masses now with their own wild inflation; in others, it varied with the intensity of their yearnings for "upward mobility", now denied them. These agonies were among the worst in America. The inflation was not as bad as in many other countries. The U.S. standard of living was far superior to most. But by now Americans were so accustomed to seeking "upward mobility" each year, and TV advertising was not only the most intense of any country in the world, but it was increasing in its thrust and its frequency by the year.

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Overall, inflation had increased prices on essential commodities by 100% since 1967. But in many areas of major expense, prices had leaped much more in just the past six years.

The price of an average car had risen from \$3,690 in 1972 to \$6,120; a week's stay in a hospital had risen by 150% since 1967; National medical costs now rose at the rate of \$1,000,000,000 an hour, were now expected to reach \$1,000 billion by year 2,000. *Time* (January 15 '79) provided some more figures; a pound of hamburger had risen in cost by 153%, and likely to double again in just two years. A woman's wollen suit cost 233% more. The average tuition fee at college 105% more; a three-bedroom house cost 69% more. Insurance in many categories had risen 300-400%.

Back in 1973, when beef prices had suddenly shot up, consumerism was widespread. Consumer advocates and women's groups had called for a national boycott of beef, and so successful had that boycott been across the nation that beef prices had been quickly reduced.

But now, consumer movements had fizzled and oil prices had been accepted as the cause of all inflationary spirals.

In some instances at least, the fact that there was now a lot more income per household, had caused its own spiralling of prices. In California, the price of homes had jumped dramatically, nearly 100% in just the past six years, from \$27,600 in 1972 to \$53,300 in 1978. Since the price of homes had risen, so also had property taxes, so

that homeowners had to pay substantially more with re-evaluation. They resented the extra taxes, especially in view of the fiery inflation.

A habitual "crank" who attempted to get taxes removed or reduced, was now getting more attention than he ever had in the many years he had tried to get public attention. But now the public was listening to him and his image in media was now changing to one much more respectable. Harward Jarvis, a retired industrialist (though reportedly still active as a President of a Real Estate Association) and a retired real estate man, Paul Gann, sponsored Proposition 13, for California, aimed to cut real estate taxes by more than 50%, and they were getting many signatures. Many in Big Business and its political friends quickly saw in it a movement that could have great value, in channeling all the nation's ills to blaming TAXES, away from Big Business and all its inflationary trends. Taxes, the old bogeyman, of the Twenties and the Thirties and Big Government could easily be made the main — if not the only — cause of the nation's economic problems. Not income tax *reform* but across-the-board relief for all tax payers — including the rich and Big Business.

Money and image making expertise poured in behind Jarvis. His speeches were now written by experts who knew how to sell an idea. Jarvis spoke of the elderly\* and the young, and what property taxes were doing to them.

His slogan? From Chayefsky's movie *Network* — "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it any more".

The implication was that the movement was a grassroots revolt against Big Brother, the Bad Government who took money from people, wasted it and this was at the bottom of all of America's problems. America had become great and prosperous with individual freedom, Big Business had developed through hard work and freedom, and had been crushed through the Bureaucracy and Interference. Jarvis even looked and talked like the "mad TV anchorman" of *Network*.

Media took it up big. From TV network evening news, local TV news, newspapers and magazines, the movement was called a "grassroots revolt" a people's revolt, a "crusade, the first since the Boston Tea Party" (which had been the revolt against the tax on tea, and had culminated in the American revolution against the British). CBS's *60 Minutes* the very successful magazine "expose" format program, had Maury Safer deal with it with great emotional appeal, where each of these points were carefully highlighted (including "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it any more"). *Time* magazine was to give Jarvis top coverage, eventually even a cover photograph (June 19, '78) with the "I'm mad as hell" slogan headline when proposition 13 carried through with a thumping 2:1 majority. But the vast, emotional, glamorous national coverage had served to fire the imagination of the public across the nation. Immediately 40 States were calling for similar movements by Jarvis. Even in England, where the Op-Con movement among the lower-middle and middle class had been growing for years, and was now at its zenith, calls came for Jarvis to bring his crusade for relief from the massive tax burdens.

The "tax revolt" campaign had just enough truth and touched enough of

\* The elderly were suddenly becoming a recognized and important segment, among marketeers and politicians. After the World War 2 "baby boom", youth population had grown very important; but now the percent of the middle aged and the elderly was becoming a major and highly important segment for both marketeers and politicians. Corporations, agencies and research houses did analysis of the older citizen's markets. Their estimated size in the 1980s, (30%) their purchasing power, and analysts advised that far more attention should be given to this forgotten segment.

consumer grievances to be identified with. As we have seen, inflation and emotional frustration at stagnating economic levels, instead of the usual "upward mobility", was a highly frustrating condition for America's middle income. Taxes *were* eating into their savings; some property tax payers were in financial trouble; TV highlighted the individual cases very effectively during the campaign.

There was government waste. As the movement caught on, TV programs like *60 Minutes* in addition to 'exposés' of Welfare fraud and minority (Mexican-American) aid schemes in Los Angeles even went to a small Midwestern town to show how a Fire Department run, as a private business, was doing so well. The \$159 Billion spent by HEW (Health, Education and Welfare) was brought up by every media and just about every commentator, even though it was known, to media at least, that the Carter administration had started what no previous administration had done — worked out savings, and an ongoing program of cuts and reform. The Carter administration had commenced very early in fact to "get the fat out" and begin the enormous task of reducing bureaucracy and waste, and to reform current programs.

The Welfare system, for instance, about which Carter had another massive reform program waiting for Congressional action, undoubtedly had fraudulent claimants — but clearly too, some strange provisions in the present welfare regulations for recipients. The wife and children got more money if the husband had deserted, so many husbands left home to aid their family; wives working part-time were penalized, and so on.

But it should have been obvious to the average citizen that the problems of the economy and inflation were clearly not just of government waste. Even if it was not heavily publicized, news came at an average of at least once or twice a week of corrupt practices in Big Business, whether it was bribery, or defective manufacture, or exploitative price increases. Californians themselves, were perhaps even more aware that Government now was trying to reduce waste, that under the severe fiscal austerity of Governor Brown, State spendings were down to an all-time low and that the State in fact had amassed great reserves — among the only States in the Union to have such massive reserve funds — of over \$6,000,000,000. Ironically (but generally unknown) it had been Reagan, as Governor of California, who had increased taxes by \$1,000,000,000 a year. Also, Californians had suffered as much through Big Business tax loopholes and Big Business malpractices as anyone — in some ways more. As residents of the car driving capital of the world, for instance, Californians had known more suffering through auto defects than anyone else. In just the past three years, 9,700,000 American cars had been recalled at the prodding of consumer advocates by the Federal Highway Traffic Safety Commission. Among the other hazards had been a life-endangering location of gas tanks in small Ford cars, the Firestone radial tire horror reported to have been known to the corporation but ignored. The Commission had also completed a study that found that consumers paid \$19,500,000 a year in unnecessary or fictitious auto repair, out of a total of approx. \$50,000,000 on auto repairs spent nationally each year.

It was also known how the auto makers deliberately made parts so that a small defect required the replacement of an entire large, expensive unit and that simple, standardized parts could save a lot of money to the consumer.

But for the public, there were problems in the era of "Looking out for Number 1". They were frightened of Big Business and its power. The recent "recession" and threats of "stagnating economy" were cause for alarm, the loss of jobs. TV and other major media for sometime now constantly brought in experts like economist Milton



Freidman, Governor Burns (formerly of Federal Reserve Bank); politicians like Reagan, Ford, Goldwater — all of them faulted Government waste as the primary cause of inflation, and what Reagan and Goldwater called “handouts” and “giveaways” to the unemployed and those on welfare.

Importantly, the criticism of TV commentators and indirect propagation in TV programming had for years established certain attitudes towards taxes, bureaucracy, Government waste. Nowadays, it was very acceptable to avoid taxes (cheat a little) whenever one could.

And saving on taxes was not as confused as all the other “reforms”. It was a direct saving. It was money that remained in the pocketbook, a clear and tangible benefit. The planners of Proposition 13 had done an expert, professional job; even the selection of California, the speeches of Jarvis, had all been well organized. California was right because Californians, deep into hedonistic living, also were equally keen on the wherewithal that made that living possible. Californians had been heavily “conservative” for years — with many Defense establishments in the area, including aeronautic and aerospace manufacturing projects; heavy expenditures on Defense were strongly backed by Californians. The property price had risen a great deal *more* than average — and with it, property taxes. And, importantly, the austerity of the Brown Administration had caused a massive surplus to accumulate, money that would reduce the blow of lost tax money at least for the first year, by which time, the rest of the nation, noting that no mammoth disasters had fallen on California from reducing property taxes, would be even more keen to cause such reduction nationwide. The slogans and appellations — “I’m mad as hell and I’m not going to take it any more”, “taxpayer’s revolt”, “First such revolt since The Boston Tea Party”, were all very effective. Even Jarvis, with a style like *Network’s* mad TV anchorman, was right.

The fact of course was that Welfare and other “handouts” were only a small part of the use of property tax money. The largest use was for local services, primarily schools, sanitation, police, fire department etc. When the Jarvis bandwagon had won through, and the dust was beginning to settle, the real facts and figures began to emerge. In saving property owners some tax cuts Jarvis had served them. But in a wider sense, Jarvis was in effect America’s new Neutron Bomb.

The Property Tax cut would amount to a loss in revenue of over \$7,000,000,000; the loss however could be considerably more, because federal “matching” funds would also be lost. Property tax would be cut from an average 3.2% to 1%. Governor Brown agreed to use \$4 billion out of his savings of \$6 billion to cushion the losses. However, there would be mammoth loss to schools, services and in government employment. It was said to call for the loss of 75,000 jobs in State employment, 8,300 in Los Angeles alone, including 1,600 policemen. Street cleaning funds would drop by 90%. The Human Rights Commission would have no money at all. City bus, fire department, hospitals, and especially schools would suffer the greatest. Free lunch for poor children was out as were many programs for the disadvantaged and handicapped children.

And, most importantly, of the property tax savings, individual homeowners would save about \$2.3 billion. However, *nearly \$5.0 billion would be saved in property taxes by Big Business*; major corporate giants would get the greatest cuts in property taxes. Lockheed Aircraft (so recently involved both in extensive federal aid given to it by the Nixon regime and in bribery cases around the world) would save \$9,500,000. Standard Oil would save even more — \$13,000,000. Real estate corporations and vast industrial operations would also be the most benefited. Individual home owners found

later that they did *not* really save much in taxes *after* Proposition 13 — because the new market value was now being used for assessment.

The Property Tax bandwagon however was ready to move on into other States; Ohio, Oregon, Colorado, Arizona, Michigan, New York, and above all — Boston, where these taxes, because of the massive tax-free property ownership of Churches and Universities in the area — was the highest in the country. Polls now showed fresh remarkable acrobatics in public opinion. Just a few months before, inflation had been ranked as their chief worry by 66% of the public. Now only 39% did. And now (*Time*/Yankelevich survey reported June 19, '78), fully 48% were highly concerned about keeping their homes and just 29% were concerned about keeping their jobs. In Ohio, taxpayers refused 89 out of 139 school tax levies, rejecting even the emergency funds required to save Cleveland and Columbus schools from going bankrupt. Jarvis himself, had become such a folk hero that now, when arrested and tried on a drunk driving charge, the jury was unable to reach a verdict and the charges were dropped.

Op-Con politicians now rolled up their sleeves and began their "crusade" for income tax cut-backs. Republican politicians organized a nation-wide speech-making blitz on tax cuts and Government waste. "Any Republican", said Senate Republican Leader Howard Baker "who does not recognize the opportunity is a political idiot".

Senators Roth and Kemp had introduced a Bill in Congress to cut income tax for everyone by 30%, including Big Business. One unknown Congressman (Moths) had apparently seen the opportunity for national prominence in introducing a Proposition 26 to cut all income tax. With the November Congressional and State elections only a few months away, politicians were competing to out-promise opponents in cutting taxes. Some had planned early. For instance, Geoffrey Bell, a Reagan aide, had been sent to New Jersey, two years ago, to set up residence in order to qualify as a candidate for the Senate. With heavy, multi-million dollar advertising, Bell virtually saturated the TV airwaves with his campaign. Favoring the rich or the poor (in tax reform), he said on TV commercials, was not good. It was not the American Way. We are one nation. We must give tax breaks to all, he said. In other commercials he said we have never been a nation of tax cheaters. But we need to strengthen the economy, by cutting taxes to help people; people, he said, need new cars, need to send their children to college, for the American Dream. Tax cuts like the Roth/Kemp proposal will provide a great boost to the economy. Bell's slogan in each commercial was "California had proposition 13. New Jersey has Geoffrey Bell". His massive campaign worked to defeat the Republican opponent in the primaries, but he had trouble, despite his advertising spendings, for the November elections. A major problem was that his personality came through vividly in the debates against Democrat Bill Bradley (a Rhodes scholar, basketball star). His somewhat cheap shots at Bradley in the debates (e.g., calling him Mr. Garbage, then apologizing for the mistake) helped him to lose.

But many others with heavy advertising and with Tax Cut programs did win. The Republic Party National campaign itself had featured the Chairman, whose commercial began by saying. "we all know that Taxes and Government spendings are the primary cause of inflation" — stated with such matter-of-fact confidence that anyone who did not agree had to feel quite stupid. Milton Freidman, and a new economist, Arthur Laffer, were quoted even more frequently. The Laffer Curve was an impressive argument, until you found that all it said was that when taxes grow high, Big Business does not have enough incentive to grow. But the campaign worked. And it certainly got Congress to move on a Tax Bill.



Carter's energy program, civil service reform, welfare reform, hospital costs reform all still languished in Congress, but now with a flurry, an Income Tax Bill was passed by Congress in August 1978. Carter had proposed substantial cuts for the lower income and even for the middle income; under the Carter Plan, those earning over \$200,000 a year were the ones penalized with heavier income tax and social security tax. And he had asked that capital gains "the rich man's tax", now less than half of regular tax, be increased to be on par with the tax structure for other regular income.

The Bill however now passed by Congress and made law was vastly different and based on the House Ways & Means sub-Committee (Congressional sub-Committee) recommendations; it went almost diametrically in the opposite direction. Deductions of personal property state and local taxes from income tax were upheld. On the other hand deductions for medical costs and casualty losses were reduced. The "Three Martini Lunch" and the more elaborate "Business expense deductions" were to stay. The 10% investment tax credit for Big Business was also made permanent. Capital Gain's Tax, which Carter had strongly argued should be *increased* was now *cut* from 46% to 35%, with at least an estimated \$1,800,000,000 tax benefit for the wealthy. And, Corporate income tax was cut from 48% to 46%, thereby providing Business with a saving of an estimated \$5,000,000,000 a year in taxes.

Commenting at a July Senate sub-Committee hearing, and noting the direction that Congress seemed to be headed, Treasury Secretary Blumenthal said the Bill should be called "The Millionaires' Relief Act of 1978".

Media, predictably, made quite a case for Congress, by suggesting all kinds of possible benefits from this new Act, for even the common man. Daniel Yankelovich, the social/political researcher whom *Time* used, had evaluated the attitude of the lower and the middle income in the tax revolt. "Yankelovich has found that most poorer Americans still believe that they have a chance to achieve wealth and they do not want the opportunity removed... Indeed, a 66% majority favors cutting the capital gains tax" (*Time* September 25, '78). Based perhaps on this "inside information" much earlier, *Time* had already begun to impress on the public, that "capital gains" could be very beneficial to the lower/middle income — when it sold something valuable! In fighting against the (Congressman) Steiger amendment to reduce Capital Gain's Tax even more (to 25%) — it was Carter's anger that made Congress compromise at 35% — Carter had said "I will not tolerate a plan that provides huge windfalls for millionaires and two bits for the average American". At which *Time* magazine responded (July 10, '78) "The President was misleading when he thundered that the Steiger Amendment would scarcely yield 'two bits' for the average American. Many 'average' Americans have found that inflation has sent the price of their property way up...". *Time* also gave examples; an elderly couple selling their home would have \$1,050; a family selling its drycleaning business would save \$2,625. A cab driver, if he sold his cab and (for some reason) also sold \$10,000 stock at the same time, saved \$3,000. The TV networks all provided similar "hypothetical" cases, of elderly, or small businesses. Major Media never added what happened when these low/middle income people, and those employed would be doing when they were *not* selling. What they would be doing, of course, even with a very tightened Government spending — and of course it needed tightening — is paying in taxes to make up for what the rich saved daily, monthly, yearly, many thousands of times more through the reduced Capital Gain's Tax. The three TV networks in fact treated this "victory for Congress" over Carter, like it did several of the issues on which the President was at loggerheads



with Congress, as if it were a ball game at which TV and the public were spectators rooting for Congress.\*

*Time* also (August 21, '78) announced the Congress Tax Bill with the bold heading "Money for the Middle class"; subhead; "The House rejects the President and votes a tax cut of its own". That of course suggested that somehow the House had found ways to undo Carter's plan to help the rich especially when it was all accompanied with a large cartoon of Carter falling head over heels trying to catch a congressional home run (at baseball). Then in the text (which perhaps very few read through), came the disclosure: "It [the House] voted down the Administration's proposals, 229 to 193 and approved the Ways and Means Committee Bill 362 to 49. That provides an overall tax cut of \$16.3 billion. The Message will not *entirely* appease the middle class, however, since the cut translates into an average of only \$163 per year in savings for the individual taxpayer. Because of the large increase in Social Security taxes that go into effect in January, *many members of the middle class will be paying more to the Government than before, even with the tax cut.*" (Italics added for emphasis).

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With the national mood turning towards tax relief (not tax reform) and angry with government "handouts" to those who did not try hard enough to support themselves (the frequent media "case histories" of welfare cheaters had made a deep impression), the black and the poor were becoming desperate in seeking their defense.

The middle income blacks, by and large, had no real personal problem in identifying with the mood of the white mainstream, though city dwellers were soon facing declining services as the Proposition 13 fever caught on.

Black leaders were attempting their political moves; some such as Rev. Ralph Abernathy, the successor to Martin Luther King, as head of Southern Baptist Christians, was already making overtures to the Republicans (he would eventually endorse Ronald Reagan) in the remarkably naive belief that this turnabout would somehow frighten Carter into more tangible help for the black community (that Abernathy would have been unaware of Carter's plight is beyond belief); Veron Jordan continued to criticize Carter; even the astute Jesse Jackson (for long one of the few blacks who did not merely play on black emotions but emphasized the politically unpopular idea that blacks must work hard to improve themselves), was now willing to make overtures to the Republican Party, appearing before their Committee in 1978 to say "Black people need the Republican Party to compete for us so that we have real alternatives ... The Republican Party needs black people if it is ever to compete for national office". No doubt much of this was from a pragmatic viewpoint, the acceptance of Carter's declining fortunes and the need to seek some grip among the

\* *Time* Magazine (Oct 16 '78) was itself to admit that at least favoritism for home contractors ruled Congress "The House ... fell a surprising 53 votes short of over-riding Carter's veto of a \$10 billion public works bill that would have funded 59 highly varied water projects. Throughout the legislatures home districts ... while it might indeed be cynical for a Congressman to vote against the energy bill out of revenge or even mere pique this would be in the tradition by which the political game has long been played in Washington."

rising fortunes of the Op Cons. Andrew Young, a fervent Carter aide (later U.N. Ambassador) tried hard to keep the blacks in support of Carter but it was clear that strong, unified black support for Carter was a thing of the past.

The twists in the economic vicious circle were now to take on predictable and ominous proportions. Most urban centers were in dire financial straits. In July 1978, the Senate, at Carter's strong recommendation agreed to provide New York City (almost bankrupt) with the \$1.5 billion it needed to stay solvent (a request overturned earlier by President Ford).

Immediately after that announcement, the N.Y. Police threatened to go on strike unless their new demands in salary were met. Soon the New York newspapers were on strike and on July 18, the striking workers blocked the Daily News truck exit to stop the delivery of the newspapers and the police were found to be unwilling to disperse them; the police said they felt in sympathy with the strikers because they (the police) "might be demonstrating in similar ways and doing the same thing tomorrow". Soon strike demands and strikes spread to firemen, ambulance drivers, hospital staff, post office employees; in Memphis, Tennessee, on the day of Elvis Presley's death anniversary, when the city was overflowing with fans, the Fire Department went on strike and the worst fire epidemic in the city's history broke out. Authorities said the fires were deliberately set by the striking firemen. The Memphis police were also on strike demands. Cleveland, Ohio was getting closer to declaring itself bankrupt. Arson around the country was now also reaching epidemic proportions — investigators said most of such fires were set by arsonists employed to recover insurance compensations. In New Jersey, there were soon at least one or more fires of a serious nature each week, taking several lives; Newark Mayor Kenneth Gibson declared that his city was a "disaster area" because of lack of funds; cuts were unavoidable, even in the strength of its police force.

Street crime increased everywhere as did demonstrations of anger by the seething masses from the lower income, many from the fear of increased violent crime and lessened police protection. The most gruesome of the many complaints against an "uncaring bureaucracy" was the symbolic action of a woman later said to be on Welfare. She tossed the severed head of her murdered mother at the steps of City Hall, in Newark, shortly before Christmas, 1978.

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Some interesting facts had finally been made public — at least in the professional journals, not the regular mass media. And they were made public because Westinghouse, one giant conglomerate (which also owned a commercial TV network combine that competed against the three big networks) was angry.

If we use the standard yardstick of what the advertisers' own National Association of Broadcasters had set as the guidelines for TV (that should not be infringed by its members), we might estimate that the major metro areas with about ten-twelve commercial stations (VHF & UHF) now had a great many commercials, about 4,000 advertising commercials during a 24 hour period. This is with somewhat conservative estimate of the number of 10 sec "ID" segments that were usually on the increase, and the station or networks' own promos.

What really had been happening — as suggested earlier in timing the leading game show *Hollywood Squares* — is that the networks' fully-owned stations in

particular, were slowly increasing the time generally permitted for advertising. The NAB agreement was that each station should have no more than 9 minutes of advertising in a half-hour during daytime TV and no more than 6 minutes of advertising in evening prime time.

Now Westinghouse Broadcasting, the TV segment of the giant Westinghouse conglomerate, had been making a three year study of advertising time on the three big TV networks, and the results were published in the *Advertising Age*, July 3, 1978. The findings included the following:

1. The networks had ignored the advertising time limit 24.5% of the time in 1976-77 and 34.7% of the time in the first eight months of 1977-78.
2. The resultant 395 extra commercials aired by the networks in 1977-78 had earned for the networks an extra \$20,000,000.
3. The calculation of the additional time surreptitiously allocated for commercials did not include the extra commercial time used by the networks to promote their own entertainment and news shows.
4. Computing just the 30 sec. commercial, the networks had aired 1,118 excess 30 sec. commercials in 1975-76, 1,188 in 1976-77 and 1,583 in 1977-78.

A study conducted by the 4 A's (American Association of Advertising Agencies), who were empowered and responsible to monitor such matters, was now also disclosed: it had also found that network-owned TV stations had grossly violated the commercial time regulations; in New York (at the network-owned New York stations) this violation amounted to 70% of the time by WABC (35 of 50 hours measured), 56% by WNBC (28 out of 50 hours measured) and 32% by WCBS (35 of 50 hours measured).

Nothing about all this was revealed in the popular press or on TV, of course.

While the TV business was doing very well, and enjoying high credibility with the public, there were occasional areas of concern among some segments of the public when the illiteracy level of children in the commercial TV age was revealed by new studies.

Occasionally there were other problems for TV networks in court cases involving the serious and important right of journalists to protect confidential sources and in the claims of TV-inspired crime. The networks won these cases in court.

In the area of "protecting confidential sources" by media, there were continuing problems. As we have seen — and will see later — this important and valid right of the media had become the refuge of propagandizing, with a reporter airing whatever he or she wished to say in favor of one viewpoint, and attributing that view to "an official" "an observer", "a confidential source", or "an official who does not wish to be named". It is of course quite likely that there were confidential sources sometimes but the misuse was prolific from the early days when Harry Luce had pioneered the technique in *Time* magazine. And there were other problems too — one of which was dramatically revealed in the case of a "Dr. X", accused in New Jersey of having caused 13 patients to be killed over a period of years.

*New York Times* reporter, Marvin Farber, had notes of interviews with Dr. X, which he refused to give to the police, the Justice Dept. and even to the Judge who promised to keep them confidential if they were not substantive evidence in the case. *The New York Times* backed Farber all the way. Fines were levied on both; Farber was sent to jail; it all seemed a marvelous example of journalistic integrity but there were twists to it. Following the tremendous publicity given by all media to Farber, it was revealed that he had already negotiated the sale of a book he would write



on the subject for Doubleday, and had been given a substantial advance for that purpose. The question then was, how much of his refusal to part with confidential information was from journalistic integrity and how much from a desire to protect that information, so his forth-coming book would be a great success? Farber's own personality also was suspicious. He seemed to thoroughly enjoy all the personal publicity. He dressed right for the many photographs and TV segments, and he never removed his pipe from his mouth on these occasions; the best example of this was the *Time* magazine photograph of Farber in jail — taken through the bars, with Farber standing close-up on the inside, with a pipe in his mouth.

Aside from TV News, TV programming had built up (coincidentally?) the Marvin Farber case with emotional intensity — through the airing of more than one episode in the highest rated shows dealing with such a situation. On CBS' *Kaz* on October 29, '78 the hero's reporter girl friend had refused to part with the name of a "source" and amidst considerable emotion has chosen to be jailed for it. And in the highly popular *Lou Grant* show, (also CBS) about a newsroom, one of the co-stars goes to jail for the same reason, also amidst great emotional build-up.

Lawsuits by those opposed to the impact of commercial TV's accent on violence and especially those concerned about its power over the subconscious mind were to be totally unsuccessful. In July, 1978, an \$11 million suit was filed against NBC by a nine-year-old victim and her mother, because the child was raped by a boy and three girls after the attackers had watched *Born Innocent* which contained such a situation in its plot. The NBC attorney Floyd Abrams' view was highly publicized: "if there was an adverse decision (to NBC), he said, it would have a chilling effect on creative arts throughout the nation." It ended happily without the "chilling effect". The Court sided with the NBC network.

It was no surprise however. A much more powerful case had developed in Florida and the precedent it set, clearly directed the courts against any actions by those who claimed that TV watching even contributed to violent acts in real life. The case involved Ronnie Zamorra, a Costa Rican 15 year old boy, brought to the U.S. a year before by his mother. The boy had become obsessed with U.S. TV, and the evidence presented showed he seemed never to miss any crime shows. He found it hard to be accepted by American boys, and so his obsessive TV viewing became his main occupation, and when he talked it was always about the latest episode he had watched. Then one day, in company with another boy, he entered a neighbor's apartment presumably to burglarize it. The neighbor, an 80 year old woman, who knew him and his mother, caught the boys. The woman said she would report Ronnie to his mother, but she was feeling weak and wanted a scotch and soda and sent Ronnie to the kitchen to fetch it. On the way he looked through a chest of drawers and found a gun. He returned with the drink and then — according to his testimony — did not know how and when, but he shot her. She died. The case would normally have gone into juvenile court, but Attorney Ellis Reuban, himself reportedly strongly against the influence of

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\* During the height of the Iranian Revolution in 1979, a student brought a tape to *The New York Times*, which was said to be of the Shah giving instructions to his aides, apparently collaborating the revolutionaries' claim that he was fiercely ruthless and a fascist. Other American expert sources at different stages tested the tapes and said the voice was authentically that of the Shah.

*The New York Times* did not pursue any investigations. Instead it printed the story of being given the tape and included in it the name of the student, its "confidential source", who must no doubt have feared for his life as the Shah was still the Shah.

TV, offered the low-income family the opportunity of defending Ronnie, free of charge, if he could make a test case in the regular Courts.

The defense claimed that Ronnie was mentally unbalanced as a result of the excessive influence of his obsession with TV Cop shows, every cop show, especially *Kojak*. It was argued in his defense that he did not have a gun but had picked it up spontaneously from the woman's home and shot her. The case itself was allowed to be filmed for TV by the Judge who seemed to thrive on the national exposure. As the trial proceeded the jury were reported to be irked that they did not get the TV cameras often enough on themselves. The Judge disallowed the testimonies of psychiatrists for the defense and their case histories of 2,500 disturbed children who they claimed had been adversely influenced by TV. The Judge made ponderous speeches on TV and for the print media. The jury came in with a guilty verdict against the boy; Ronnie Zamorra was sentenced to 25 years in adult prison, with no time off for good behavior.

In the meanwhile, the Council on Children's Media and Merchandising had found that in just the first nine months of 1975, the three TV networks had aired 3,832 commercials for sugar-coated cereals, and 1,627 commercials for candy and chewing gum on just the daytime week-end programming directed at children. Even a child who watched less than average (i.e., 25 hours a week) could therefore be bombarded with 8,500-13,000 food and soda pop commercials in a year. Television, especially now with mothers working so much more outside the home, was the teenage baby-sitter, and pre-school age children watched it an average of 35 hours a week. The average American child had already seen 5000 hours of TV before he or she entered the first grade in school. The average TV viewing by an American youth before he or she was 21, was 20,000 hours.

An extensive Office of Education study (Federal Government) now completed and released showed that 22% of Americans over the age of 17, were totally illiterate; another 32% were "marginally literate". New York schools tests released in November 1977 were to show that 40% of all public school students were reading below their grade requirement; 42% of nine-grade students, 36% of seventh-graders and 40% of eighth-graders were reading at least two years behind their level; among black students, the National Assessment of Educational Progress showed 42% of blacks under the age of 17 were "functionally illiterate". Among all Americans, another study revealed that 26 million of the population were functionally illiterate.

A report by the City Board of Education, New York, October 1977, showed 2,402 teachers and students had been assaulted inside their schools during the 1976/77 school year. In a national study directed at 4,000 school principals, it was found that only one-third of crimes committed at schools were ever reported and only one out of every six violent attacks, resulting in injury, were ever reported. In yet another national study, 14% of the students in big city schools, 9% in suburban schools, and 8% in rural schools said they could easily obtain heroin.

In reacting to a brief storm over the possibility that TV viewing *may* be contributing to the frightening lack of literacy and the disinclination to read and write among students, CBS did a Special, with Walter Cronkite. CBS, through its many subsidiaries, owned many corporations in publishing and children toys. These companies included Creative Playthings Inc. (toys); CBS Educational Publishing Inc; Holt Rhinhart & Wilson (Educational Publishing); BFA Educational Media Inc; Winston Press; CBS Consumer Publishing Inc; CBS Professional Publishing Inc; the involvement of Columbus Broadcasting System with its many subsidiaries in the



business of publishing was immense — in school text books, school visual teaching aides and popular reading material for children and grown-ups. It was for this reason that CBS' purchase of Fawcett Publications had been denied permission by the Justice Department — but the Courts over-ruled the Justice Department.

Cronkite, in his three day, three-part coverage of the literary crisis among school children, did not even broach the subject of CBS' role in the psychological makeup of high school students until the last part, thereby suggesting not only that TV's role in the present crisis may be negligible but that the purpose of the long "Special Report" was in no way intended as any kind of rebuttal to criticism. In answering the charge that TV "may" be contributing to the decline in literacy, Cronkite turned it around to show how TV could be used positively in assisting education, with the use of visual teaching aides, electronic equipment\*, even the use of regular commercial TV programming to improve the students grasp and understanding of plots, character profiles, etc. \*\* He pointed out how some teachers were giving assignments of favorite TV programs to students as class projects and then having discussions on them. TV as teaching aide had enormous potential, he concluded.

He was right, of course, in that TV *could* be used as an education aid, except for one thing: what *commercial* TV taught was the critical problem. They watched commercial TV more than they did anything from infancy to adulthood and it was this that created serious psychological problems.

TV programming had now moved on to the re-affirmation of Opportunistic Conservative values\*\*\*. There were some very good series, and because they were successful in ratings, the insidious message was all the more effective. The trend towards ridiculing foreigners was becoming more marked, though more subtle and not yet at the level of pre-Youth Revolt days. Rewriting of American history, however, moved from strength to strength to add elitism, refinement and upper class heritage to just about every stage of American past. In a mini-series, highly promoted as "docu drama", called *The Awakening Land*, on NBC (1977) about the early years of Midwest discovery (17th and 18th century) we were told of schools where children are taught Latin and classics and doctors looked like transplants from contemporary hospital drama. In ABC's mini-series in the Fall of 1978, *Centennial*, the American Indian stole, wanted guns, were wily, and often invited retribution ("Don't make the White Man kill you" begs a white well-wisher at one stage); a promo for one episode told of the "halfbreed girl who must choose between two white men"; there was *Immigrants* another "historical" mini-series (on a syndicated network, in November '78) dealing with early California settlements in which not only did the settlers go around in full riding habit as though right out of Regent's Park but the heroine says at one point, "I've never been introduced to a servant before, and a Chinese one at that"; NBC's *Charleston* about the Southern aristocracy evidently wished to take over where *Gone With The Wind* left off. Even in the remotest areas of the Midwest and the Wild West there were mansions (with libraries and

\* Cronkite did not add that school text books, visual and other education "aides" were manufactured by CBS subsidiary companies.

\*\* No doubt inspired by Cronkite's suggestion, or some follow-up to it by TV network sales promotion, several more schools and colleges did commence courses on TV shows, especially evaluating plots of soap operas; some even provided credits on it.

\*\*\*It should be noted that there were practical problems (including extreme boredom) in monitoring all the shows. What is provided here is a selection from some of the highest rated.



chandeliers). These "docudramas" were made with enough facts to convince many of the authenticity of all that was presented; they were sometimes the first and the only lessons in history for many in the audience. It all went with the feverish search for "family trees" and the hope, so often satisfied, by the search firms-of coats of arms in one's ancestry.

It all went well with contemporary depictions of the American upper class. In *Dallas* about a rich Texan ranch family, even cow auctions were conducted with buyers in formal wear\*; *MASH*, the TV series based upon the movie made when anti-war and New Values sentiments prevailed, and at one stage, a very well written and directed show, was now slowly beginning to emphasize something else: ethnic superiority. Winchester, one of the doctors (newly added to the series) is a Boston aristocrat, (he can even trace his ancestry back five whole generations) and while he speaks with disdain about the vulgar lower classes and the Koreans, the others in the outfit are more charitable, more *generous* of the shortcomings in these less fortunate, a patronizing attitude that had grown with each year of the long-playing series (it was on TV longer than the Korean War had lasted); Winchester is appalled to find that Korean natives took his best wines and drank them with the wrong food, "the barbarians"; he does condescend to have a fling with a Korean girl in one episode but she is of Korean aristocracy; yet for a hamburger she is willing to shack up, in the back of the truck, which appals Winchester; he also has to try and teach her table manners, how to hold a fork and knife. In one episode a Turkish U.N. soldier arrives, wants to kill Koreans with a chopping axe; Klinger, the American from Toledo, but of Arab ancestry, now frequently shows his ethnicity; he tries to sell junk to his fellow Americans in the Unit. "Take your Casbah and get out of here" roars the Colonel; his honesty is always in doubt; he himself sums it up in one episode, just as "Radar", the Midwest white boy-next-door, does: "Back in Toledo, when we needed something we simply stole it" he said. "In Iowa, when we needed something we simply asked for it" says Radar (CBS, Oct 8, '78).

On CBS' *Rhoda* there was a stupid and annoying (but "loveable") Spanish-American assistant; in CBS' *Taxi* there was the Spanish or East European immigrant who did not only have big problems with English but with good manners and refinement generally — he makes brown wine (but he is "loveable"); on NBC's *Sword of Justice* the Puerto Rican assistant, a kind of "Tonto", wore knee length swimsuits and is generally dumb (but "loveable"). In a January 13, '79 episode of ABC's *Welcome Back Kotter*, even the slum juvenile heroes of Brooklyn find the mannerisms of a cousin from Guam to be loud, rude, selfish. On *WKRP In Cincinnati* (CBS February 7, '79) Japanese tourists keep clicking away on their cameras and speak no English; "He thinks he has seen a Fotomat Store"\*\*\* says one of the main characters when one of the Japanese is excited by what he sees from the window. Youth humor was now also trending towards making fun of foreigners, and Spanish-Americans. In *Delta House* (ABC Feb 24 '79) Omega House is a fraternity of sons of elite American families, who need a heavyweight desperately but refuse to accept an Australian. "No one from the Southern Hemisphere" they say. In *All In The Family* (CBS, February 27, '79) Edith and Archie find that in a Chinese

\* *Dallas* was to strike it big everywhere, even Europe, and lead to imitations, including *Dynasty* in which Henry Kissinger would later make a guest appearance.

\*\* Americans were now making fun of Japanese tourists with cameras not only on entertainment shows but on news magazine programs like CBS' *60 Minutes* and NBC's *Weekend*.

restaurant that they used to visit 24 years ago, not only are the tablecloths, and table settings the same, but it still has flies. In *Happy Days* (Sept. 28, '78) Arnold says "Japanese clean toilets once a month". On the higher youth-oriented *Saturday Night Live* (NBC) humor was frequently directed against foreigners; recognizing (as few in fact did) that an Indian Doctor had really delivered a test-tube baby no more than a month after Britain's Dr. Steptoe, (the unrecognized Dr. Sen was in fact to commit suicide) the joke was "Mother and child are starving comfortably". A black regular on the show, weekly made fun of the way Spanish-Americans spoke English. And Steve Martin, soon a super-star, had made it big particularly with his routine of the "wild and crazy guys," Czechoslovakians, who thought they knew about contemporary American lifestyle but were in fact so crude and boorish they were shunned by American girls.

In *Barney Miller* (ABC 25, '79) one of the main characters says "Police in London don't carry guns" at which another responds "Maybe because they can't afford it — things are pretty bad there right now". Bob Hope (owner of "Cleveland Indians" baseball team) did one of his specials on sports, which included a skit about how the British could not understand baseball and American football, on Oct 15 '79, with Danny Kaye (owner of another basketball team). The skit included a Japanese unable to play baseball correctly and performs hara-kiri (currently in actual fact the record for baseball home runs is held by a Japanese, not Babe Ruth or Hank Aaron).

Another twist to satisfying both the desire to gossip (but not admit it) about British Royalty was the way "news" presented its items. On April 6, '78, CBS' Walter Cronkite said, "There is nothing the British love more than gossiping about their Royalty" and then proceeded to give details about a possible romance between Princess Margaret and a younger man; on another occasion he had a segment on a runaway horse of the Queen — all on the *Evening News*, normally trying to squeeze world and national news in 22 minutes.

The standard rebuttal to any criticism of such ridicule or distortions was of course that it was all in fun; in fact it was very much a serious commercial tool; and as to it being innocuous, why then did Americans become so angry at any suggestion of ridicule or distortion about themselves? Why had so many articles been written about ridicule or distortion about themselves? Why had so many articles been written about European TV's image of the U.S. in the late 1960s and early 1970s? Why did powerful ethnic groups object so vehemently and get TV to change its policy about them? Why did the networks have such strong objections, even asking cancellations of such programs? There was such a case, on Jan 21, '79, in the CBS' screening of *Black Sunday*\* on the same weekend as NBC was to televise the biggest — and the most expensive — football game of them all: the Super Bowl. The story of *Black Sunday* deals with an Arab (PLO) who plans an attack on America by bombing the stadium where the Super Bowl is to take place. It works out fine — with the aid of the Israeli Secret Service the plan is thwarted — but NBC felt that by screening this movie (even though it had been seen by millions before) could be detrimental to the attendance of the present Super Bowl, to which NBC had television rights that year.

And TV promoted itself — in subtle and in obvious ways. It could do this with series like NBC's *Who's Watching The Kids?* where the small-time local news announcer is the son of a very rich man who is so idealistic he rejects his father's

\* The movie was made to look like a documentary, with actual dates flashing on the screen. Such movies were becoming quite frequent. Another one *Two Minute Warning* with an all star cast, telecast Feb 6, '79 was about Arab terrorists trying to kill the Israeli Minister at a football game.

wealth to take this "meaningful" job; on CBS' *The American Girls* who are a couple of beauties dedicated to investigative reporting for their TV network; NBC's *Please Stand By* showed how in small towns, the local TV station is run by a family just like the local grocery store; and a "mini-series" like NBC's *WEB* billed as an honest "controversial" look at the TV network industry — even CBS' *60 Minutes* did a segment on the show and there were many write-ups about the show in magazines and newspapers around the country. In *WEB*, over several episodes, Ellen Cunningham, the TV heroine, shows various sides of the TV programming world; in the first episode (Sept. 12 & 14), the network had a documentary called "Our America" produced by a radical. The network boss is furious and hurt when he reviews it. It says all kinds of terrible things about the country he loves. So he asks Cunningham to change it all before deadline, an almost impossible task. But she manages. She gets a bunch of idealistic students to gather in the basement and help with the editing; "Patriotism is not a dirty word" they all agree and perform the job around the clock free of charge. The Sept. 27 episode established that TV network executives have "class"; not only in clothes and lifestyle but cultural indoctrination — for instance, even the sales executive quotes poetry and loves abstract art. And importantly, loving soap opera programs falls *within* the rarefied atmosphere of culture, we are told. The highly cultured sales executive asks Cunningham "You like soap opera don't you?". She does and she admits it loudly and clearly. The episode also establishes that if a nasty Big Advertiser tries to throw his weight around, some of the Big Executives at the network might cave in for a while but eventually their integrity overcomes their weakness and they defy the Big Advertiser despite the major financial loss. A Big Advertiser is also significantly said to be one who spends a few millions of dollars with the network, not a few billion. Ellen Cunningham's purity of soul is established repeatedly, when she is angry or crying. In an earlier (Sept. 21) episode, in the midst of a lot of soap opera tears, she selects a dying friend for a leading role — when she could have had a "Jane Fonda" (thereby establishing that even a top star, and a principled radical woman like Jane Fonda would be happy to take a TV role) her assistant is aghast at this nepotism. "You're going to cheat, Ellen? It's out of character" he says.

In series "showing what it really is like, behind the scenes", in TV, in the movie industry or advertising agency, consumer research is only a vague archaic practice; to watch these programs, without knowing anything about these businesses, you could swear that all decisions and ideas are thought up by minor and major creative geniuses and implemented. You could imagine the look of shock and horror on the face of someone like Ellen Cunningham, for instance, if you said that ideas, plots and appeals undergo massive consumer research before, during and after they are made. She would probably cry.

The business of advertising was rarely covered except in superficial mentions in scripts before, but now there were two series, *On Our Own* and *One Day At A Time*; both from CBS, both featuring women. In *On Our Own*, two single girls (one a copywriter and the other a visualizer) were apparently intended to appeal to the broadest spectrum (a speciality of producer David Suskind) the copywriter is WASP, has been to a "finishing school" and does not hesitate to let you know she was taught to hold a "stiff upper lip." The other is kinda average, kinda ungainly, kinda ethnic, "middle class" Italian-American. There is an account executive, who like the well-bred copywriter, is of upper class — but he is boring, stupid. He seldom holds a conversation without talking about his golf, polo, country club set, has friends like



"Choo Choo" and "Fifi" and he says things like "old boy", "cherio" and "ta ta". The girls come up with campaign ideas in a moment, and if the client is sold, that's it.

In *One Day At A Time*, heroine Ann Romano, a divorcee with teenage daughters, has no experience or training or education to speak of; but she gets a job at an ad agency, and is quickly a top account executive (overcoming male chauvinism because of her "qualifications") and is soon going on business trips and doing great things for her clients. She too thinks up ideas on her feet. One was significant: she decides that a great idea for the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra would be for them to play the top commercial jingles (the strong implication being not only that it is very respectable to do this but that some of the jingles are as good as the best classical compositions). It was not the first time that this thought has been communicated. In a *Mary Tyler Moore* episode, Mary's friend Phyllis' brother writes advertising commercials but is also a classical pianist; in fact when he plays a dog food commercial Phyllis thinks it is Mozart.

The guidelines of what was right, popular and the way to be was communicated. "Your Shakespeare says 'Who steals my purse steals thrash'" says the Hassadic Jewish dealer to the Police Captain "don't you believe it" (*Barney Miller*, ABC, Feb 1, '79). In this series another police officer with lots of general knowledge is a bore. In *Love, American Style* (repeat, Oct 3, '78, Metromedia) a middle income couple are with their boss and wife, and learn "Truth can hurt and is not always the way... diplomacy is better". In *WKRP in Cincinnati*, an older radio executive who loves Shakespeare but does not like or know baseball or football, is not only made fun of but once even suspected of being homosexual; In ABC's *Carter Country*, the black police lieutenant-hero teaches the small-town colleagues how to work on a union demand for pay increase, like the New York people do; in a promo (on WPIX, New York) of one of the many Christmas programs, Scrooge is now not just a miser but a "teetotalling skinflint" (non-drinker). Among the many major long-running successes were the standard theme — such as in *The Odd Couple*, the series based upon the movie; while Felix, the meticulous, art-lover, and lover of all refined pastimes is a hypochondriac and a bore and a nuisance; his friend Oscar, though sloppy is loveable — he has no morals or principles but he loves baseball and football and women. Significantly while Oscar remains the sportswriter as in the movie, in the TV series, Felix is not a writer for TV news — as in the movie — but a photographer.

Some of the successful, well-written, well-acted and highly rated series, from Lou Grant to *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* to *All In The Family* were also now slowly used for effective propaganda. The real-life "Dr. X" and Marvin Farber, *New York Times* matter was still in court until November, yet by then CBS had two stories — one was in top rated *Lou Grant* (Sept 25, '78) where one of the young heroes Rossi goes to jail rather than divulge a confidential source — amidst great emotion and applause. The other was CBS' *Kaz* (Oct. 29) where the female lead (girl reporter) goes to jail rather than disclose a confidential source, amidst great emotional platitudes. In another *Lou Grant* episode (Nov 6), there is a nice plug for the AMA as another lead's mother, dying of cancer, is to be taken by the man to a quack in Mexico and he is finally stopped from his madness. And in one episode (Dec. 4 '78) we find a marketing expert is trying to get the paper to become "consumer oriented" but despite the great extra profits potential, the dedicated professional news people refuse to prostitute themselves. The newspaper's owner, Mrs. Penshaw, represents the new TV image of America's upper class. As in *Kaz*, *WEB*, *Different Strokes* and a score of other new series, the upper class are real aristocrats; they live in

European-style mansions, are "old" money, play golf and go to country clubs of course but also indulge in charities though they have never known much about the poor — their refinement is easily shocked by contact with the uncouth, and they speak with a distinct accent of some kind. Mrs. Penshaw even has a fireplace in the year-round tropical climate of her Los Angeles office. This new imagery of the elite no doubt provided even the middle and upper income Americans — especially the labor union members — for something new to strive for in their pay demands and "upward mobility". In *The New Mary Tyler Moore Show* (Oct. 7 '78) Mary believes "the best things in life are free" but is soon convinced that "it's a rich man's world".

Specials, "star studded", boosting Big Business and Americana, were back in style. Within a few months there were the General Electric Anniversary, Ford Special, Westinghouse "Image America" Awards, Ohio Special, and special anniversary celebrations for CBS and NBC (50 years) and ABC (25 years). In its weeklong specials CBS in reviewing past achievements laid claim to the Edward R. Morrow exposures — including that of Sen. Joe McCarthy and no doubt most if not all of the audience did not know or had forgotten that Morrow and Fred Friendly had to fight, even pay for the advertising themselves, in order to have the Morrow accusations on the air. Typically, these specials revelled in aging stars from Bob Hope to Jimmy Stewart and politicians from Gerald Ford to Goldwater. And they ended as John Wayne ended the General Electric Special Sept. '79: thanking the audience, asking them to be proud of being "good, honest, decent Americans going to work watching TV, going to ball games and watching a parade".

There was one other type of TV program in which propaganda or image-making could also be carried by the artful planner — and that was the innocuous game show. We have seen some examples from *Hollywood Squares* earlier. With its continuing popularity, it had by now become the most watched of all game shows; it was on not only everyday of the week, in daytime, but twice a week in the evenings too. With that had come a marked increase in subtle political messages as well. Host Peter Marshall, like several other regulars on TV, had become a mouthpiece of the new Conservatives. When he did not make a remark — in passing of course — about Government spendings or about Carter, there were the questions in the game that provided the necessary vehicle. Take for instance, the "question" posed on January 4, '78: "Richard Nixon has valuable advice about foreign policy and President Carter would be wise to listen to him, says Ronald Reagan. True or false?" The answer of course is "true", after which Marshall had his cue to add that Nixon had done a lot of great things, was an expert on foreign policy etc. And it also established the sensible viewpoint of Ronald Reagan.

Banks continued to offer you money on loan through their advertising, almost swearing that they did it all out of love. Savings bank advertising had taken on a more aggressive style starting with Joe DiMaggio, the former baseball star acting for the Bowery Savings Bank. In his many commercials, DiMaggio asked if you thought you needed to be rich to travel to Europe, get your children through college, or spend the winter of your life in luxurious complexes? No, he said. All you needed was to save at the Bowery. For Dollar Savings, the commercial showed each time how one of two friends in youth became very wealthy, the other was almost destitute. One of the latter was embarrassed by his own wife for his failure, another saw that he could never have a gorgeously expensive wedding his friend had or live in the house the rich friend did. The rich friend reluctantly reveals his secret each time; he had "found a better way", i.e., saving at Dollar Savings Bank. And when the government enacted that banks



may give interest on checking accounts too — provided the right level of balance was maintained — many banks came up with claiming to have originated the idea out of love. The Citibank commercial said, "Until now consumers never saw this money (i.e., interest). It had to be kept by the bank". And then followed a re-enactment of the scene from "Network" only this time people opened windows and shouted "I'm going to Citibank to get what I deserve". Other banks had their campaigns all claiming that they were now given the freedom to do what they had wanted to do all along — give interest on checking accounts ("Until now banks had to keep this money but now here is a revolutionary new plan at New York Bank for Saving" said one). Another bank had a well-known TV actor with an "ethnic" look who became so emotional he almost cried as he told you that this philanthropic institution had decided to let its customers have interest in these hard times so they could pay their dentist bill or "have a night out on the town".

The American auto industry continued to believe that its problems could be solved with enhanced image through testimonial advertising by loved celebrities. To counter the problems of the 39 million radial tires that it had to recall (amidst the legal suits that provided evidence to show that the company had known they were likely to be defective and dangerous), Firestone now employed veteran movie actor James Stewart for a TV advertising blitz. Stewart told America, in his loveable folksy style, that Harvey Firestone (the late founder) had been most dedicated, principled man of business.

Veteran actor Glenn Ford was brought back to the screen by General Motors to tell America in its commercials that "when they write the history of the 1970s, and the changes that came to be made in the automobile, they will probably credit Buick with the greatest change". He could be right at that. In 1978 it was discovered that 128,000 GM cars mainly Buicks (the higher priced) had Chevrolet (lower priced) engines and had to be recalled. It certainly was an unprecedented "change". Movie and TV celebrities were now back in advertising commercials, after claiming in the late 1960s and early 1970s that they had all imbibed youth values and were not for the excessive materialism that had prevailed.

Many celebrities who had not been willing before, were now in the market for advertising, including Lawrence Oliver and Sophia Loren. Bill Cosby, the black "new values" comedian, had announced his "retirement" during the early 1970s from show business to go and complete his college studies. But he was back now, selling products hard on TV. He became the award winner as TV Salesman ("Presenter of the Year") in 1978.

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By mid 1978, Carter's relations with Israel were at their lowest ebb. In Israel itself, however, Begin's rather open insistence on new settlements in occupied areas was creating problems. Segments among the Israeli public, and the opposition Labor Party were appalled at the deteriorating relations with the U.S. President, and even more by the fact that for the first time, public opinion in the U.S. was beginning to show signs of awareness of the Arab position, especially that of Egypt, and some were actually leaning towards it.

CBS reminded American audiences of the ire of the Israelis against Carter: "The Israeli people are very angry with Carter and want no part of him" (July 2, '78). On



July 7, CBS had a long segment to explain how "Syrians were attacking beleaguered Christians"\* in Lebanon, and how Israel was helping the Christians to keep them from "being liquidated". In fact by now, of course, facts about the "Christians vs Muslims" propaganda should have become known even to many Americans who read U.S. periodicals.

In the *Jewish Press* weekly, for instance, former Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, in an article, had stated that only 60% of Lebanese Christians were Maronites, and involved in the conflict. The rest were not; importantly, even that 60% were now divided into three factions, that of Suleiman Franjeh, the recent Lebanese Christian President, who sided with Syria now against Gemayel's Phalangists. But to U.S. media only the Phalangist friends of Israel were Christians. On July 10, NBC said Syria was trying to "cut down Christians" (showing a slide of a Christian priest) and Israel said it would not stand for it.

Yet only a bare two weeks earlier, Time magazine had reported that "some 200 Phalangists descended on the resort village of Ehden (near Beirut), where Tony Franjeh the eldest son of (former President) Suleiman Franjeh ... was vacationing. The Phalangists opened fire on Franjeh's house with rockets and guns, killing him, his wife and daughter, and thirty-five other people" (Time June 26, '78).

TV entertainment programing continued to give Arabs the full treatment. In *Charlie's Angels* (the popular soft-porn series) on ABC, May 24, '78, Arab terrorists from six Arab countries infiltrate an Ice Show in the U.S. run by an old Jew. They plan to kill the visiting oil sheikhs, whom the American secret service is trying to save. There is the standard harem dancing, lechery, gruesome eating habits, among the terrorists and the oil sheikhs too. The oil sheikhs are saved by the American beauties and the mild-mannered Jewish owner of the Ice Show who gets to call the Arabs "camel-eaters" in the bargain. Some of the programs specialized more in ridiculing and/or pointing out their barbarism and criminality. Aaron Spelling Productions, for instance, had several successful shows every week, on ABC, including *Charlie's Angels*, *Vegas*, *Love Boat* etc. in which, periodically, the plot involved Arabs or made passing reference to them or their religion, or whatever it was they called religion, because while wearing their peculiar garb and mannerism, they perpetually lusted after women, gambling and liquor. They made nuisances of themselves in respectable elite surroundings, such as the sheikh in *Vegas*, November 1, '78 who made a ruckus about wanting a private gambling table in his suite, and management threatened to throw him out; or, as in the same segment, they picked up American girls as hostesses (but the American girls, even when money hungry, presumably only had to be ornaments) because "Sheikhs seldom travel with their wives"; even when the Arabs had dance parties, they watched with their slaves or squatted down instead in front of the TV watching Westerns. A passing reference could sometimes provide even stronger reinforcement of an image. In one episode of *Starksey & Hutch* (a Jewish-Gentile Cop partnership series), Oct 24, '78 one of the heroes says about a woman "She's the suburban Tupperware type (i.e., utterly respectable Big Business housewife). She would know as much on how to deal with this [rape situation] as she would know how to deal with the PLO". In one passing sentence, several satisfactory images are reinforced.

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\* This was, it must be remembered, after Syria had gone in to defend the Phalangists at the request of the U.S. and Israil in 1976, found that after the PLO and the Muslims were beaten back, the Israelis and Phalangists had stormed into an offensive again.

There is no doubt that at least some of the wealthy, "orthodox" Arabs behaved the way TV portrayed them (though the TV renderings were of course extreme). What is significant is that this was the stereotype Arab and one somehow felt they did not deserve equal justice.

November '78 was a period when criticism of Israeli intransigence was being heard from some elected officials, in addition to comments from Carter and Vance. Stories about torture of Arabs under occupied lands were surfacing too, if only in very mild form. The deadline for the Israel-Egypt resolution was approaching and this bothered and angered some Americans. TV provided a rash of programs that could only be construed as significant both in content and timing. There was a repeat showing of the 1966 movie *The Bible* in which Abraham rejects Ishmael; "My convenient shall be with Isaac who will be borne by Sarah" as God has told him. In the meanwhile, mean and jealous Hagar (Ishmael's mother) does annoying and stupid things; she makes cruel jibes at the barren Sarah, and later when Isaac is born and doted on by Abraham, Hagar tries in the most despicable ways to get Abraham to care for Ishmael (who is of course rather ungainly and awkward, as becomes an Egyptian slave girl's child). The movie, presented on NBC November 18, '78, was followed the very next day and for three days (November 19-21) by a mini-series, *Greatest Heroes Of The Bible* produced by NBC. These new *Greatest Heroes* did not even try to stay within Biblical events, much less Biblical words. Sponsored by the Israel Tourist Board, with an excellent jingle ("Israel — at last it's yours"), it was unusual even for Hollywood. Biblical heroes — and heroines — were more often blonde and blue-eyed than they were not; they wore contemporary hairstyles and spoke today's idioms — all except for the bad guys. Jericho of the Hittites looked very much like the squalor and pandemonium of what Hollywood had long established was a typical Arab downtown bazaar. Evidently this "Bible" presentation was laying the foundation for a new trend on TV. It was meant to be a "docudrama" or a "bio-epic", both of which phenomena, the TV industry said with a straight face, were "drama based on facts".

Not to be outdone, CBS had the special movie *The Pirates* running from November 21 to November 22. In this there are Arab terrorists, their intrigues, lack of basic decency, sleazy immorality, their ways of brainwashing decent young girls, even the daughter of a very wealthy, decent, cultured Arab businessman (it should be quickly added that this Arab is really a Jew switched at birth, which is why he has all the good qualities). His wife, an Arab, makes love to an American degenerate while his "brother" (though not his blood brother of course) films her lovemaking, then proceeds to blackmail her and him later. It all ends happily — the daughter and the Jewish/Arab father are saved — by the Israelis, and the Arab terrorists' plot is foiled by them too.

ABC network, on its part had *Vegas* on November 22, in which a German baron kidnaps American girls to sell them to slavery in the Mideast; the plot of course includes lecherous Arabs. The American detective hero, however, manages to foil the kidnapping. NBC won out in this particular week's competition.

In *Rockford File*, the popular TV weekly series on NBC, the honest private detective sometimes gets caught up in Mideast problems. In the November 10 episode, an Arab wife gets involved with a gigolo; her husband has many affairs; but, in keeping with Muslim ways, her father, on discovering that she has brought shame to his fair name, orders her killed. Her brother too, is wholly in favor of killing her. But Rockford saves the situation; the father and brother die. The Arab girl's gratitude is significant. Despite being extremely wealthy (especially after her father and brother



are dead) she pays Rockford a paltry \$125 for all he has done, at such great risk to his own life.

Another area through which a desired image of the Arabs and Muslims could be reinforced was through the fear of Arab oil wealth buying up — or desecrating — the beauty of America. This was frequently done through news commentators (without the need to be too specific). The opportunity provided by El-Fassey, presumably a sane man, who having bought a Beverly Hills mansion, had proceeded to convert it into a museum of horror was perfect for media. From Barbara Walters to Maury Safer to every known and unknown TV commentator and print writer — they all covered the plastic flowers, the pink statues (with added genitals), the ornate decorations in the home, and his reported intention to build a mosque near the swimming pool and — above all — his claim that it was all according to his religion — could not have been improved upon.

Curiously, however, the Saudi royal family — to which El-Fassey was said to belong — did not do what one presumes they could have, at this or El-Fassey's future escapades in the U.S.. Even if they could not simply recall him or freeze his assets, they could have officially condemned him. The Saudis were deeply incensed at the media-created image (they created a furor about *The Death of a Princess*) but it was never clear why they did not about El-Fassey.\*

Fiction on TV was by now of course as believable as fact, and to this end some shows obviously (as the movie *Network* had) or subtly provided situations in their plots to suggest Arab "invasion" of American business and land ownership. In *Grandpa Goes To Washington*, an NBC weekly series about a loveable old college professor who is honest, good and decent — yet manages to be elected a Senator — finds among his weekly problems which range from Presidential corruption, to deceitful colleagues to unfair labor demands. October 24, '78, he comes up with a beauty — in a matter regarding pollution; "it is possible that Business is the one in the White Hat" he says (meaning Business is not in the wrong). Curiously, it was the only ecology situation in the script. But he does charge ahead when a school for poor kids has its playing grounds about to be taken away — by a heartless entrepreneur. It takes a while to find out the real owner who hides himself behind all kinds of middlemen, but it is a rich Arab. And, of all things, he wants to build a mosque on the lot. By word and gesture, Grandpa tells his audience how angry he is at this foreign invasion but proceeds to diplomatically turn the Arab's intentions away from his dreaded mosque. In the process, he has problems finding out anything about these strange foreigners. A product of the wholesome Midwest, he has never had to be polluted hitherto with Arab/Muslim ways. His son, the Pentagon General, finally tells him how Arabs are to be greeted. One says "Namaste". Whether the son was pulling his father's leg (an unlikely possibility considering his very serious nature) or whether the script writer himself had got Hindus mixed up with Arabs was never clarified. Yet another type of Arab to be dealt with was the American-educated. Sometimes, when very fervently pro-America, this young prince was saved from his evil countrymen by the CIA. But the arrogant had to be told where they got off — as the police officers did in "CHIPS" (on NBC, November 18, '79). The heroes hauled him off to jail.

\* One really effective spokesperson for the Arabs at this time was the wife of the Saudi Ambassador to the U.S. At a PBS-TV special, she fielded questions from a group of "representative" Americans, about women in Islam. The thrust of her cool and collected responses to the criticism was "What makes you think your ways are superior? What makes you think you are worthy of imitation?"



There was usually at least one question on the Old Testament on *The Hollywood Squares* and often at least one on Israel or Nazi atrocities. And there were jokes on Arabs or their religion, the latter usually more subtle than the former. When the question is asked (as it was in April, '78) "Accordingly to legend, Allah picked up seven handfuls of dirt..." some might find it hard to believe it is ridicule, except when such questions were posed quite often. When the question is asked "Muslims are required to do something five times a day" the question itself invites some base jokes, while the "correct" answer itself was significant: "Face Mecca"(not pray). When Marshall asked the question (June 30, '78) "Jerusalem is sacred to three religions: one is Judaism, the second is Christianity; and what else?" A celebrity joked, mumbled different syllables then said "Mohammed" or Mohamedanism. Marshall got into a debate on whether that was the same religion as the one his producers had provided as the right answer, which was "Islamic". But even the most naive must wonder why questions such as that asked on June 29, '78, were asked: "In Saudi Arabia, sitting around drinking Scotch all day is a great status symbol. True or false?" Since the Saudis had been known to be strict Muslims, the celebrity said "False". "No, it is true" said Peter Marshall. "Scotch sells for \$140 a bottle there." Jokes are provided to celebrities by the production staff of *Hollywood Squares* (the fact is mentioned on-air in each segment) and so, on November 7, '78, when asked "Why would an Arab rather ride a white horse than a black?" Leslie Uggams, who is herself very black, mouthed the answer provided her with some embarrassment: "Because they can be seen". And one more example might suffice "It is difficult to swear in Hebrew. True or false?" The answer, said Marshall, is "True. Most of their swear words are borrowed from Arabic".

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While TV reinforced the stereotype images it had built over the years, the Mideast situation had moved from an impasse to an extraordinary Summit and back again to despair. Sadat, on his side, was alarmed, aware now that Begin had no intention of parting control with the West Bank, let alone Jerusalem. His own position continued to get precarious as even Egyptian citizens were now convinced that all Israel wanted was a separate peace treaty with Egypt to cut down on the Arab strength. Such a treaty, Sadat knew, would be known for what it was: a sell-out and Sadat had promised to resign if his Jerusalem extravaganza did not lead to Mideast peace.

"Sadat has expelled the Israeli Diplomatic Liason Team" said the *Today* NBC news reader, on July 24 morning. John Chancellor on that evening's NBC news called the Israeli team "the Israeli Military Delegation". Whatever in fact they were, Sadat had taken a severe step in ending the discussions. Cyrus Vance was now sent by Carter to try and mend fences and keep the talks going. Sadat seemed more willing to talk with Israeli Defense Minister Weizman than with Begin. Vance, now also preparing with colleagues for the forthcoming talks with the Russians on SALT, got agreement for a Foreign Ministers' conference between Israel and Egypt to be held at Britain's Leeds Castle. Those talks led to nothing. Now Carter tried to get Begin to join in talks with the Prime Minister of Egypt. Begin felt it was an insult for him to meet with anyone less than the Egyptian President. Carter then forcefully persuaded Sadat, who would only agree to a meeting with Begin if Carter was present, so a

"Summit" was set up at Camp David, the presidential retreat in Maryland for the second week of September.

In the normal course, it seemed like a hopeless waste of time. But there were unusual circumstances involved; all three men were under heavy personal vulnerabilities. Sadat had made bold statements in November and thereafter he stood to look foolish if the other Arab leaders had been right after all. Begin was under attack even in his own country for spoiling the image of Israel and by his blatant moves alienating American opinion. Carter was, of course, under heavy fire, his popularity at an all-time low for any President; every move he made was heavily criticized by media and by every political opportunist in the United States. Looking much older, haggard and clearly under deep emotional strain, Carter's one hope of easing the onslaught directed at him lay in finding a solution that was acceptable to the Zionists on the Mideast. Carter's morality and considerable determination had been worn thin. He was seeking a rationale to get out from under the enormous burden that his morality had laid upon him. Even on that other foreign policy treaty — with Russia on SALT II — it had seemed so straightforward and clear even up to a few months ago. Leaders on both sides clearly wanted to end the insane arms buildup, especially in the nuclear area. Yet now they were as far as they could get, and pressures against an agreement were growing.

Relations with Russia became even more strained and colder as some U.S. politicians made angry demands for the release of all Soviet Jews and other dissidents from Russia. At the start of 1978, not only was great pressure being applied on the White House to concentrate efforts on this issue by media and some politicians, but now direct threats were being sent to Russia. Senator Moynihan, as co-chairman (with Senator Jackson) of CDM (Coalition for a Democratic Majority) sent, what columnist Mary McGrory called a "fiery message to Moscow .... to the extent that you lay a hand on any of those we know and you will have to feed yourselves next winter" (alluding to critical shortages in some staple foods that Russia had bought from the U.S., such as wheat); McGrory added that some "Democrats privately grumbled that the outburst was ill-timed (i.e. in the midst of SALT talks); whereas others complained that it will be Russian people and the American wheat farmer who would suffer if no wheat were sold". But Russia's own anger at these threats provided strong exchanges between Washington and Moscow, and increased publicity to Russian advances in arms development led not only to delay in the SALT II agreement but increased convictions that more should be spent by the U.S. in developing new nuclear arsenals. Columnists (such as the widely read Evans and Novak) and TV commentators also said the SALT II agreements gave "a dangerous strategic advantage" to the Russians.

Ever since 1975, as we have seen, presidential hopefuls, the Military, Conservative politicians and media had voiced convictions that Russia had violated the initial SALT agreement: Reagan, as a 1980 hopeful, said that Russia was now militarily stronger than the U.S.. The impact of these continuing fears voiced over TV and in print media was apparent in the self-contradictory public opinion reflected in the polls.

The results of the CBS-*New York Times* poll (May 30, '78) were headlined in the *Times* "Carter's 17 Month Rating In Poll Is Below That of Predecessors"; it went on: "The American public's approval has fallen, perhaps because of doubts about his foreign policy leadership to 38%". The poll had asked people to "agree/disagree" on some statements such as "too unspecific and fuzzy on most issues"; and they had



dutifully agreed on that one. The sharpest decline in approval was in handling the Mideast from 39% in the previous wave to 29% now. The data was segmented by age, blacks, Republican, Democrats, etc. but not Jews. As in the NBC poll, with regard to SALT II with Russia there was that self-contradiction among those who wanted arms control but had become suspicious of Russia because of all that media emphasized; 78% wanted a SALT II agreement, yet 64% did not expect Russia to abide by it and 42% were convinced now that Russia was militarily already stronger than the U.S.. In one breath, the pliable public claimed by a wide majority to want another SALT treaty, yet by an almost similar majority did not expect the Russians to abide by it! Of course, no "open ended" reasons ("Why do you say that?") were asked.

What was curious about the inflammatory speeches by some American politicians was the apparent desire to worsen U.S. relationships with Russia at the time of SALT II agreements. And it worked. By June, '78, the public had been sufficiently impressed with the arguments of the hawk politicians and media commentators to make a startling turnabout. *Time* magazine reported its newest poll results in which the public said — by a majority of 56% — that any treaty with Russia limiting nuclear weapons was too risky; now only 32% favored a new SALT agreement. And the public now, by a decisive majority, *disagreed* with Carter's decision to cancel the B-1 bomber and the neutron bomb.

By now the periodic threats of letting the Russians starve, of cutting off all trade, by the Moynihan-Jackson-Javits team and their supporters in media and Congress had predictably soured the Russians considerably. Carter's own strong speech to the Annapolis Naval academy, while it may have helped ease tensions for him with his U.S. political opponents did not at all help dentente. By the end of June, Moscow's leading newspaper "Pravda" criticized the U.S. more strongly than before for its "Turnabout in U.S.-Soviet relations and for meddling in Soviet internal affairs".

Many of the individual dissidents whom Russia called spies were, understandably, heroes in U.S. media. Extensive emotional coverage was afforded to them. But media now received a powerful jolt. Since 1974, it had made Soviet novelist Alexander Solzhenitsyn into a kind of Western folk hero, a symbol of the preference of Russian intellectuals for the West over communism. Solzhenitsyn had in fact been, as so many intellectuals were, against totalitarian control over physical and mental freedom. His defection to the West had become one of the top media stories during the early 1970's. But while he now lived in the U.S., not in Europe where he had spent his first years after defection from Russia, he had his own opinion about Western culture. In 1975, when President Ford had invited him to the White House, he had politely turned him down. Now in June, '78, in an address to Harvard University, Solzhenitsyn dropped his bombshell on America media: In part what he said was this: "Through intense suffering, our country [meaning Russia] has now achieved spiritual development of such intensity that the Western system in its present form does not look attractive. After the suffering of decades of violence and oppression, the human soul longs for things higher, warmer and purer than those offered by today's mass living habits, introduced by the revolting invasion of publicity, by TV stupor and by intolerable music. Hastiness and superficiality are the psychic disease of the 20th Century. More than anything else, this disease is reflected in the press. There is a dangerous tendency to form a 'herd', shutting off successful development. I have received letters in America from highly intelligent persons, maybe a teacher in a far-away college, who could do much for the renewal and salvation of this country, but his country does not hear him because the media are not interested in him..."



Media reported the Solzhenitsyn speech in varying degrees of brevity and quickly put the matter to rest. Needless to add, Solzhenitsyn was almost blanked out of news coverage thereafter.

Then the Russians claimed that Anatoli Shcharansky, arrested some time earlier, was working for the CIA, and produced a Dr. Lipousky to provide details of a spy ring, "mainly Jewish". Russia also announced that it had evidence of the connection of U.S. journalists with Shcharansky and CIA. Shcharansky had been charged with treason nearly a year ago; President Carter had publicly denied that computer expert Shcharansky had any connections with the CIA.

Media covered the Shcharansky trial in Moscow in great detail. Those guilty of treason were executed in Russia, it said. The clamor against the trial grew in fervor. When the guilty verdict was announced however Russia, perhaps in deference to what was by now world-wide agitation sentenced him to 13 years of hard labor, not execution. Nevertheless, it was brutally harsh punishment for someone who — if Western media were correct — had merely expressed his honest opinions. President Carter criticized the verdict; he said the trial of Shcharansky and fellow dissident Ginsberg was an "attack on every human being who believes in basic human freedom". But Jackson and Moynihan wanted much more. Congress itself (both Houses) passed a resolution deploring the trials. Senator Jackson said Secretary Vance should not be allowed to go to Geneva for a SALT conference with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko; Senator Moynihan said "to send Vance to Geneva is to participate in the butchery now going on in the Soviet Union". Other punitive measures were being suggested. Carter was being pressured to stop the sale of oil equipment to Russia; to stop the sale of a \$7 million computer that Tass, the Soviet news agency, required for the 1980 Olympic Games, scheduled to take place in Moscow. But Carter was unwilling to go to these extremes. And Vance went, as we have seen, to Geneva, and to Leeds Castle, to try and get some kind of patched-up discussions going between the Israelis and the Egyptians as well as the SALT negotiations between himself and the Russian Foreign Minister. But it was clear that the SALT II agreement was now definitely headed for disaster.

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Extreme cynicism was voiced by media about Carter's move in calling the Camp David summit. Media analysts saw it as a desperate gamble by Carter to save his own presidency; TV commentators said Carter was evidently convinced that his own popularity was so low that even an abortive attempt to bring accord in the Israel-Egypt deadlock was probably seen by him as doing no harm to his public image, already down in the cellars.

Carter had barred all news media and had strongly requested the Egyptians and the Israelis not to issue any statements to the press while the talks were in progress. Media found this very disconcerting. TV's great advantage over print media — immediacy in reporting — was lost when nothing was known, or likely to be known, until the final statements. Walter Cronkite decided to head for the Camp David woods and report his Evening News from the gates of Camp David, thereby assuring his fans that he was doing all he could to snoop and obtain the latest tidbit.

During the 13 days that Camp David discussions went on, TV provided segments on the concern of the Israeli settlers in occupied Arab territories, their fears that God-given land may be lost. And on Sunday, September 10, the two leading news interview shows on TV — *Face The Nation* and *Meet The Press* had two of the strong pro-Zionist Senators, each of who gave remarkably similar details on what the settlement in the Camp David discussions should be. On CBS' *Face The Nation* Congressman Jim Wright was the guest. Wright gave what he said was his plan of settlement between Israel and Egypt. It was critical, he said, that Israel should be allowed to have expanded boundaries. At some points, current Israeli territory was very narrow, in one spot as narrow as eight miles and Tel Aviv airport was only minutes away from Arab lands, and so Arabs could do a lot of damage.

The NBC *Meet The Press* followed immediately after *Face The Nation* in time. On *Meet The Press*, Senator Henry Jackson was the guest. He spoke about U.S. commitments to Israel. And he said it was critical that Israel be allowed to have expanded boundaries in any settlement worked out at Camp David. Haifa was at some points only 18 miles from Arab territories, he said, and Israeli security was always in jeopardy.

In the meanwhile, the three network Evening News continued to pound away at Carter for all the nation's woes. On September 14, for instance, Walter Cronkite said "Despite its best efforts, the Carter administration has failed to hold inflation down below 11%". In that same news program (but *not* treated in the same context) it was reported that the FBI now knew and was in a position to prove that hundreds of millions of dollars was involved in fraudulent price increases by the Houston oil processors, in illegally switching "old" oil to "new", thereby enabling them to have charged nearly 2½ times the price to the public, under Nixon's two-tier price structure since 1973. Apparently it never occurred to the TV anchormen to connect the weekly new disclosures of corrupt practices, illegal price hikes, inefficient production of the corporate giants, with inflation. The Justice Department was soon to be ready with enough evidence to file suit for the recovery of \$1,000,000,000 out of an estimated \$2,000,000,000 overcharged illegally by the top U.S. oil companies since 1973. And on other matters, there were already a series of lawsuits against Gulf Oil Company, one of the largest corporate conglomerates, for having secretly participated in a world-wide "cartel" to manipulate supplies and raise the price of uranium. World prices, reportedly as a result of this monopolistic "cartel" had increased from \$6 a pound to \$44. And in that bulwark of management-labor bargaining and employment, a total of 10.7 million automobiles had been ordered recalled by the Federal Highway Safety Commission in 1977 because of safety defects and now only a few weeks before, American Motor Corporation had been ordered to recall almost all of its 1976 automobiles — 270,000 of them — because of defects; in January 1978, Ford had been ordered to recall 640,000 vehicles because of defective parts, and that same week in September, the case against Ford Motor in the matter of the dangerous location of the gas tank, had taken a serious turn of criminal negligence, when it was revealed through internal Ford Company memos that Ford executives had known about the dangers of that gas tank locations.\* By now it had also been established that "midnight mergers" and "cartels" were not confined to the large conglomerates. Price fixing by a controlling cartel in Chicago through its daily "yellow sheet" determined

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\* Until 1977, the U.S. Government had no laws controlling fuel tank locations.

the wholesale price of beef; an increase of one lb. meant many million of dollars in extra profits to the controlling cartel.

None of this seemed to be of importance to the news media celebrities as they faulted "the Carter Administration" for inflation, economic stagnation, and Big Business' "lack of confidence" in Carter.

September 17, 1978 was Emmy Awards Night on Television, a very important night for the industry because the awards were the equivalent of the Oscars for Television. A special award had been voted by his industry colleagues to William Paley, the founder-boss of CBS, who said in his acceptance speech "We have a responsibility for total honesty to the American people". Predictably, the NBC highly acclaimed mini-series *Holocaust* (about Jews in Nazi Germany) won several awards. One of the recipients of a *Holocaust* award (it might have been the producer) in his acceptance speech, ended by enthusiastically announcing "If (Prime Minister) Begin is watching, We Did It" (the words "we did it" were spoken in Hebrew or Yiddish).

Prime Minister Begin was watching. He was standing by with President Carter and President Sadat to break into the Emmy festivities with good news: in the Special News Report that now interrupted the Emmy ceremonies, President Carter announced with great pleasure that an agreement had been reached after 13 days of virtually round-the-clock negotiations. What he gave as a summary outline of the agreement sounded like a truly remarkable breakthrough: Israel would withdraw from Egyptian territory immediately after the treaty was signed; it would set up self-rule for the West Bank and Gaza and commence the withdrawal of Israeli control; after this the Arabs in the occupied lands would be allowed to decide their own future national alliance. In return Israel would be recognized by the Arabs and normal relations would commence with Egypt as soon as a treaty was signed, which was to be completed in ninety days. Sadat too seemed pleased, spoke in glowing terms about Carter and the heroic efforts Carter had made, without which the the agreement could never have come about. Begin then spoke at considerable length. He first thanked Carter profusely for all his efforts and said Carter had been responsible for the successful conclusion — by, among other persuasive tactics, threatening not to let anyone out unless there was agreement. Having spoken about Israel, Nazis, etc., he then said he had to say a few words "to my own people" and this he proceeded to do in Hebrew or Yiddish. They all hugged each other, and it was a very moving emotional scene. On the following day, the three addressed a special session of the Congress — it was on TV, and a somewhat extended replica of the Emmy-interrupting Special Report on Sunday. The two foreign leaders paid glowing tributes to Carter, who was evidently flushed with pleasure at receiving praise for a change. Carter had, it turned out, actually worked hardest and the longest hours; and had headed off a disgruntled Sadat who had packed his bags to leave the previous Friday, because he was convinced Israel was not going to move from its old position.

Carter's speech to the joint session of Congress, was perhaps most moving because despite the rhetoric it seemed sincere; he was clearly very happy — even aside from the political advantage to himself — at finding a solution to what had been an insoluble problem for thirty years of many millions of personal tragedies. Even his quote from the Bible "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall become the children of God" had the sound of being uttered by a man not for atmosphere, but because he genuinely believed it.

Euphoria now spread across the U.S. A new star located by the Pasadena Observatory was named "Ra-Shalom"; "Shalom" of course was Hebrew for "peace"



while "Ra", media explained, stood for the Egyptian Sun God; no reference was made in such explanations to the fact that "Shalom" (pronounced "Salaam") also meant "peace" in Arabic. Clearly, even in the midst of rejoicing for peace, the image of "Moses versus Pharaoh" had to be maintained.

The details of the peace agreement, as they became public, were cause for concern, however, to those genuinely hopeful about a true and just peace in the Mideast. While Israel had agreed to withdraw from Egyptian lands as soon as a treaty was signed, it still had the right to delay its withdrawal from the other Arab lands up to five years, during which time those occupied lands would be granted "self-rule" only in the form of local autonomy. It did not seem enough to please those directly involved, and predictably there were strong cries of protest and denunciation from several Arab leaders. Why should Israel, which had already occupied these lands illegally for so many years, now get five years more to keep them? And what about Jerusalem, they asked? No one had evidently touched on the return of East Jerusalem.

But even worse news was yet to come. That Israel would give up the West Bank and Gaza after five years was what Carter and Sadat said had been agreed and entered into the provisional accord signed (on TV) after Camp David. But Begin now claimed he did not agree to withdrawal from these lands after five years; Israel, he said, had agreed to *consider* withdrawal, if the local inhabitants did not want at that stage to join Israel. Begin's statements were so categorically at odds with Carter and Sadat that Carter angrily summoned news reporters and showed them the provisional agreement; Begin screamed that he should not have done so, because these were confidential and — as yet — provisional.

Carter himself had become exasperated with Begin's "ambiguity" when it came to the occupied areas. *Time* magazine had reported one such exchange between Carter and Begin in their March '79 meeting. "Carter said 'Begin kept reciting his own technical explanation of why (UN) Resolution 242 does not apply to the West Bank'." *Time* then quotes what Carter had said to Begin about this: "What distresses me" Carter is reported to have said to Begin "is my impression that what you're really saying — I shouldn't be so blunt but I will — my impression is that you're really saying is that you have no intention of withdrawing from the West Bank at all" (*Time* April 3 '78).

The sourness that had quickly been introduced in U.S.-Israeli relations by Begin's denial that he had agreed to an eventual return of the West Bank and Gaza, was where U.S. media began to play an important role. An emotional aura was created — especially effectively on TV — on the hopes and dreams of the "pioneer" Israeli settlers in the occupied land; importantly, it was stressed that even the "giveaway" of Egyptian land in the accord and the possible return of West Bank and Gaza at any time had strong, passionate opposition among Israeli citizens and leaders. With this argument, Begin's "intransigence" was made more palatable and even worthy of sympathy.

It might be interesting to quickly consider some examples of how this aura was achieved right after Camp David. From September 17-19, CBS TV had segments in its news broadcasts (repeated throughout in the various news programs and news "promos" during the day) of the "disputes" that were now developing between the Israeli settlers and their government. Angry settlers were on film, articulately expressing their fury that Begin had given away — or even agreed to possible return — of the land given to them by God. Confrontations between illegal settlers and the army

or police (sometimes themselves shown in tears at this) were filmed and reported. CBS told its viewers that it had clandestinely filmed, without the Israeli authorities being aware of its presence! By now, when CBS showed any report on Lebanon, Cronkite often said that it had been "cleared with Israeli censors". How the network — which cleared things with Israeli censors in Lebanon — could take announcer, crew, and film equipment in the open lands within Israeli-occupied West Bank, Gaza, or Sinai and film such reports on the sly, or why the Israeli Government would object to such reports, (clearly intended to back up the Israeli government stance), was never explained.

Print media too played up such "demonstrations" by the settlers against their own government.

On September 21, Tom Fenton (CBS News) showed a segment with camera shots of new settlers being removed. The settlers, said Tom Fenton, asked how anyone could remove them from land given to them by God. On September 25, CBS' Bob Simon had a segment of deep emotional appeal on the Israeli settlers in the Sinai. Overall, TV had conceded that withdrawal from the Sinai should not mean much emotionally — or even logistically — to Israelis because there were no emotional ties to the Sinai Desert in Israeli religion. But Bob Simon decided there was. The new accord at Camp David had made these Sinai settlers very sad, said Bob Simon, "their dream stamped 'Cancelled' at Camp David". In the same broadcast, Cronkite then directed the viewer to Tom Fenton in another part of the Israeli settlements (whether it was in the West Bank or elsewhere was not clear). One was shown the impressive luxury apartment complexes built by the Israelis, where, said Tom Fenton, "the Arabs are now waiting to move in from their tents".

"A Sense of Betrayal" said the *Time* magazine headline (Oct 9), referring to how the Israeli settlers in Sinai felt about the withdrawal agreement.

Israeli now used every excuse to get its objective of keeping the territories. And this was now apparent in yet another skirmish with a U.S. Official. Assistant U.S. Secretary of State Harold Saunders, was sent as envoy to the Middle East and the office of Prime Minister Begin issued a statement on Oct 28, that actions of Saunders and other envoys could be compared with action of American diplomats in "Banana Republics in South America in the past". Saunders had, it appeared *three years ago* issued a statement that settlement of the "Palestinian question lay at the heart of any lasting Middle East Peace Plan"; the *New York Post* (Oct 29, '78) charged that despite this "blunder" Saunders had been promoted by the Carter administration.

In early October, Israel announced it would build 20 new settlements in the Nagar Desert. Then in November, the Israeli government announced \$20 million program to "thicken" five Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. "The move was calculated by Begin and his colleagues to warn the Carter Administration that it must *behave* more circumspectly in its conduct of the peace negotiations... U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance quickly rebuked the Begin government" (*Time*, November 6, '78). But the Begin government also gave another reason for its move. They had resented the U.S. sending Saunders because they hated him for his remarks of three years ago (about "Palestinian rights"). Now a statement from Begin's office told friendly U.S. media; "The Carter Administration was looking for trouble by sending Saunders here. They've really got it now".

"Suddenly last week, the veteran diplomat [Saunders] became a handy scapegoat. In a stormy session with Israeli officials, he was treated in what one U.S. official called a 'very rude' manner. In a statement defending Saunders, Vance said



'he deplored the personal attacks' and retained 'utmost confidence in him' [Saunders]" (*Time* Nov 6, '78). Begin also decided it was a good occasion to move his own offices and Israel's Foreign Ministry to the predominantly Muslim East Jerusalem.

It was in this period that the Nobel Peace Prize Committee announced its choice for the award. The choice was Sadat and Begin, not Carter.

Another irritant to Israel was soon to be publicized. By December '78 reports about the cruelty and torture of Arabs by the Israeli military had become so prolific in Europe that even U.S. media occasionally covered the "charges". *The London Times* had reported Amnesty International and Red Cross concerns which Israel had consistently denied. The case of an Anglo-Saxon American girl jailed in Israel as a terrorist agent and of an American of Jordanian origin also jailed (even one U.S. newspaper admitted he was jailed only because he was of Jordanian extraction) had been reported by some media. A far greater problem for Israeli image was created — and soon to be public — of a U.S. attaché to the American Embassy, Miss Johnson, who had written a report providing cases which had convinced her that grave injustices and tortures were being conducted by the Israelis. Her report was to be disbelieved, and she was apparently sacked.

Yet, the evidence, at least unofficially, no doubt carried more conviction for the U.S. government than they officially admitted. And so on Dec 14, Secretary of State Vance, while on a visit to Israel, had made an "impromptu automobile tour of part of the West Bank and briefly visited an Arab village (Biet Sahul) that had been the subject of controversy over alleged illegal seizure of Palestinian land by the military occupying government... Israeli officials complained that they were not advised of the trip in advance" (*New York Post*, Dec 15, '78).

There was also a major furore sparked from a Palestinian documentary that the U.N. was to sponsor through voluntary donations. The *New York Post* (Oct 6, '78) had its own typical announcement; "U.S. Footing The Bill For PLO Terror Film" said the front page headline. The same article however provided, the following information: (1) The film showed the PLO were now willing to take a moderate stand; (2) The film showed PLO terrorist attacks, also showed footage of raids by Israel into areas of Lebanon; (3) Producer Pierre Desbonnet, an American citizen, insisted it was a balanced presentation and "we have to avoid hurting a member state" (i.e. Israel); (4) A special U.N. fund had been set up, a "special unit for Palestinian rights fund" and funds for the film (\$80,000) would be derived from this; (5) The Israeli government had been approached by the relevant UN authority to allow the filming crew to take shots of the occupied Arab areas, but Israel "did not bother to reply to the request".

In the Congress, Senator Moynihan with loud protests introduced a Bill to end U.S. contributions to the United Nations. Congressman Wolffe of New York introduced a similar bill in the House but that was unsuccessful.

"The Carter Administration had the opportunity to withdraw its financial support [of 25% to the U.N.] but instead lobbied strongly and successfully in Congress to defeat the amendment by Senator Patrick Moynihan" said the *Post*.

By now the difference in opinion of what was agreed at Camp David had led to more differences. Sadat, evidently afraid now that Israel could turn back on agreement even when Carter and Vance were witnesses, was clearly panic-stricken. Israel continued to insist that it had not agreed to definite withdrawal after five years from the occupied West Bank and Gaza. Carter and Sadat claimed it was the very basis for the breakthrough. Media concentrated on Israel's viewpoint and the



annoyance of Israelis and American Jews with Carter for "encouraging" and "siding with Sadat". Carter was clearly seeking to be conciliatory, but his strength was now ebbing under the barrage of criticism.

In popularity polls, however, Carter had leaped 15% higher in one, and 17% in another. Under the glow of this release from public condemnation Carter looked far less haggard and old. And he evidently felt in some ways, perhaps like Sadat — that the "burden" of the Palestinian rights was too much to carry in the face of such powerful opposition. Right after Camp David euphoria (on September 23), in Philadelphia, answering questions at a town meeting, about why the U.S. allowed the Palestinians to do "propaganda" in the U.S., Carter said, it was freedom, but he hoped they would all simply go away. And at Annapolis Naval Academy, he told the Soviet in a sharp attack that the U.S. was willing to live in peace or at war, whichever the Soviets wanted.

In the meanwhile TV proceeded with its emotional appeal on behalf of Israel. Quite early (September 27) Maury Safer had a segment on CBS *60 Minutes*. He provided "devil's advocate" questions for the Israelis to respond to, then did the bit about religious rights of the Jews to the area, the modern Jewish settlements in the occupied area compared to the ramshackle Arab housing. Sadat's insistence that no progress was possible if Israel did not abide by the agreements on the West Bank, was dubbed as "linkage", suggesting somehow that the "link" was an afterthought, not really part of the peace agreement.

By December, on the issue of the "linkage", media had established that it was Carter's support of Sadat that was the real problem, that Sadat would otherwise have climbed down. By Dec 13, CBS Cronkite reported, "Israel rejected Sadat's new demands according to Israeli sources". On Dec 14, CBS News had a segment from Bob Simon to tell America: "The Israelis were surprised at Sadat's new demands, surprised at pressure tactics from Washington, surprised at threats to aid [for Israel] by Carter if new settlements are built; the Israelis rejected all the latest Egyptian demands".

Just what was the reason for all this "surprise"? In a *Meet the Press* interview December 17, Secretary of State Vance, clarified the matter. Normally soft-spoken, he was clearly making a hard effort to be restrained, to hold back his anger. Vance said what was causing problems with progress in the Israel-Egypt accord was nit-picking, squabbles with what was clearly agreed, and now misinterpreted at will. The new "demands" from Sadat were because the agreement about future sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza had been questioned by Israel, questioning what was clearly agreed. Also, Egypt had agreed to exchange of ambassadors if Israel agreed to withdraw from Sinai and accelerate self-rule for West Bank by the end of 1979. Since Israel had refused to do this, Sadat now said the exchange of ambassadors would have to be delayed. Israel had also now asked for special client rights on oil from Sinai which Sadat was not willing to give. Israel also wanted compensation for the oil installations in the Sinai, while Egypt claimed that in fact Israel should pay Egypt for the oil it had used for 12 years from those oil wells. An extremely patient man normally, Vance clearly showed signs of exasperation at the situation, and at the provocative hostility of the journalists.

One question asked of Vance was of the classic double jeopardy "when did you stop beating your wife" mould: "Did not the U.S. Government feel that by siding with Egypt it may be undermining the peace process?"

The denunciation of Sadat and of the Camp David accord by the other Arab

countries was unanimous, especially after the terms became known, and with those terms, Begin's own denial of Israel's agreement to withdraw at all from the West Bank and Gaza. Only obscure Sudan really sided with Sadat and the accord. Sadat himself was quick to react in anger, claiming that the provision of the accord clearly included specific agreements of Israeli eventual withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. The U.S.'s attempts to bring "moderate" Jordan into further discussion failed; pliant Saudi Arabia was also found to be even more sharply opposed to the accord than America had expected.

Then on the *Today Show* (NBC), Secretary of State Vance was asked what the U.S. Government reaction would be if Israel came to the rescue of the Christians in Lebanon. Vance said he did not want to speculate. A few hours later, Israel was reported to have commenced its air, sea and land attack into Lebanon. The initial attack comprised a 36 hour non-stop barrage of firing from Israeli war ships into the heart of the Muslim sector of Beirut.\* Then came the air and land troops. The later quickly crushed through Southern Lebanon, then held a sizeable territory which Israel would proclaim "Free Lebanon" and hand over to Mayor Haddad and his band to govern.

It was during this invasion that Begin was in Oslo receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. Sadat did not attend, but sent an emissary.

But Sadat would sign the treaty on March 26, 1979, with great fanfare on the White House lawns. So entirely cornered was he that even reference to the Palestinians had to be dropped from his speech.\*\* Sadat was killed in October, 1981.

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Carter was making desperate attempts to control inflation. He announced a new Economic Plan October 23, 1978. It called for voluntary wage and price controls by labor and management. For industry, a ceiling of 5.5% was placed on annual price increases, whereas for employees, (except for those earning less than \$4 per hour who were exempt), a ceiling of 7% in annual increments was established. If the cost of living went above 7% a year, labor would be compensated by a tax credit for the difference.

In his televised presentation of the Plan, Carter pleaded (no other word describes it) with media and other detractors to give the plan a chance "If tomorrow or next month, you ridicule them [Plan provisions], ignore them, pick them apart before they have a chance to work, then you will have reduced their chance of succeeding" he said. Media started, as soon as he had announced it, to ridicule and pick the Plan apart. In fact, there had been the standard "leak" of the provisions of the Plan before

\* The *New York Post* (October 6, '78) gave all the good reasons for the invasions, in its front page article. It was, said the Post, a "warning". Israel has so far been "restrained from interfering" in the Lebanese Civil War and now was the first time it had to interfere. Time magazine, as we have seen, had admitted more than once, to Israeli involvement for two years.

\*\* One paragraph from his prepared speech given to reporters beforehand but which he did not speak at the March 26 reception was the following: "No one is more entitled to your support than the Palestinian people. A grave injustice was inflicted upon them in the past. They need assurance that they will be able to take the first step on the road of self-determination and statehood. A dialogue between the United States and the representatives of the Palestinian people will be a very helpful development."

he announced them, and media had begun to find fault — and to talk to detractors who criticized — even before he had announced it to the nation. “City wary of Carter Plan” screamed the *New York Post* headline, (October 24, 1978), “Man In Street sceptical, Dollar Takes A Plunge Abroad, Panic Hits Market”. The dollar decline was not a dramatic new development; and as far as the Stock Market was concerned, it had also shown repeatedly that its ups and downs were purely from speculation of big gamblers more often than not; in fact, for the big entrepreneurs, it was a classic way sometimes to make the market plunge when they wanted pressure brought on Washington regarding some regulations they did not like. It so happened, however, that on this particular day, (after the Post was on the streets) the Stock Market ended the day not down, but *up*, with the Dow Jones Industrial Averages rising 5.2 points to 811.85.

“There are many who wonder if Carter has given any reasons for opinions to wait” said the Post, that same day.

To those who did not share Carter’s apparent faith in Big Business’ patriotism over greed, the Plan was of course very weak. Carter did stress a warning to Big Business in his speech. While “selfish and irresponsible” corporations and employees could not be stopped by the voluntary guidelines, he said, the Federal Government had clout over major corporations who had government contracts. His intent was to publicize those who breached the guidelines and punish them on their multi-billion business with the Federal Government.

His media detractors were, however, Op-Con adherents so it was clear what they found so objectionable in the Plan. The Op-Cons never wanted mandatory controls (Nixon’s three and sixth month controls had only been political eyewash). Now Op-Con leaders were brought on TV and promptly rejected the Plan because they felt wages should be controlled, not management. Op-Con economist Freidman said no controls were needed. Labor leaders objected to any wage guidelines but felt mandatory price controls were needed.

And media’s attitude? Lets take a few representative examples.

George Meany, President of the very powerful AFL-CIO labor union, had been immediately critical of the Plan because price control was not mandatory. But then he realized that it was unfair to reject it without a try. CBS brought him on *Face the Nation* (November 5) and encouraged him to speak out. CBS’ George Herman asked Meany, “Since the President announced this Plan, some companies had already given higher annual wages. Does that not put the President’s Plan already to rest?”. Meany refused to be tempted “No, I cannot say that”. Each of the four reporters on the panel tried to make him criticize Carter but each time Meany not only would not do so, but contended that it was not Carter’s fault that the economy was in its current shape. Carter had inherited the problem, he said. “But you seem to criticise the President — argued one reporter “No I am not. He cannot be held responsible... The President inherited the problem”.

CBS ran into another frustrating and abortive effort about this time with black congressman John Conyers. Conyers, one of the Black Caucus had been invited to the White House for a talk with Carter and, it was reported, the previous evening, he had angrily walked off after the meeting, because the black leader felt Carter had not done enough for the American blacks. The next morning, CBS invited Conyers on the *CBS Morning News*. But this time it was the CBS interviewer who ended up angry, because Conyers would not criticize Carter with the expected fury. He admitted that he was unhappy at the lack of minority aid but he denied that he had walked off



angrily from the White House, he did not blame Carter personally for the problems. He said he blamed the pressures of the Republican and Conservative politicians and the current lack of public morality (less taxes, less social programs).

Later (December 24) CBS had another black leader, Vernon Jordan on *Face the Nation* (Jordan had received a lot of TV exposure after his criticism of Carter in 1977). "You have been critical of Mr. Carter's performance on urban matters... What are the chances of your not supporting Mr. Carter for President in 1980?" he was asked.

Jordan was apparently not willing to fall for that; he said that the Urban League was non-political. "You mean you will simply go along with whoever is the nominee?" asked the reporter, registering shock and disbelief.

On Nov. 3, 1978 (ten days after Carter had announced his Plan) Irwin R. Levine,\* NBC News, was already talking of a recession as were other commentators. "The President said there would be no recession but Presidential advisers conceded that if it came, it would have to be faced\*\* so the difference is that the President was on a campaign trail and his advisers were not."

Carter's "Inflation Fighter" economist Alfred Kahn was soon making himself a favorite of media by some strange behavior. Not only did he seem to disagree with the Carter Plan (though he avoided saying so, he gave enough hints to suggest he did), Kahn also spoke colorfully and had the right likes and dislikes. As he got more and more media exposure, Kahn said he was not responsible for the Plan, but was merely trying to make it work. Then he began mentioning possible recession, even depression. The Administration apparently warned him not to talk of depression while trying to make the Plan work. So Kahn began to joke about it, claiming that he would now call depression "bananas" since he had been asked not to use that word. And since media clearly enjoyed this hilarity, he spoke frequently now of "bananas". It always got a laugh from reporters. On December 25, 1978, Irwin R. Levine had a special segment on NBC News on Kahn and his clever quotes and his sense of humor. Several examples of both were replayed; in one Kahn, addressing a gathering said things like "If those schnooks had not raised prices some years ago — but they are Arabs, so I cannot call them 'schnooks'" (laughter and applause).

Predictably the ridicule heaped by media and Carter's opponents allowed violations to begin early. Some Labor leaders said Labor would not be bound by it; Hershey's chocolate was among the first to find a way around it by increasing the size of the bar of chocolate and then adding a higher percent of price increase to that marginally larger bar; the Illinois Legislative Assembly showed its disdain by actually voting for itself a 25% pay hike. Over the next months, with these precedents, others felt they could ignore the guidelines too. Unions insisted on higher raises, prices continued to rise as these higher pay demands were met and, as always, along with this, marketeers added some more to get a higher rate of profits. As of the end of Summer, 1979, there was threatened strike by the United Auto Workers, now in bargaining sessions with General Motors, acting as the representative of the auto companies; already the unions had been offered a 15% increase which they felt was not sufficient; it led the way to other labor unions demands.

\* He always used his middle initial. And a bow tie.

\*\* It was not clear why this made the advisers different. Had Carter said that if a recession came, it would not be faced?

Carter's Plan however was not original. It had been tested in Britain, as we shall see, and had worked until a combination of circumstances were to destroy it, also.

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On December 15 (when Congress was in recess) Carter announced the recognition of Communist China over Taiwan. Many politicians applauded the decision as the natural progression long overdue from the thawing of relationships since Nixon's 1972 China trip. The U.S. had been the only country in the world which had not recognized China.

There were criticisms from segments of media, however, and of course from some Op-Con politicians. Media commentators voiced concern; objections were raised for the step as setting a dangerous precedent. There was no treaty with Taiwan, and if the U.S. could do this to Taiwan, said media, could it also let Israel down as well?

Frank Church was the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee but he had already voiced his own approval of the recognition of mainland China, and so, two days after the President's announcement, Senator Richard Stone of Florida was invited to CBS's *Face The Nation*, on December 17. Stone was of the sub-Committee on Mideast and South Asia Affairs, *not* the Far East. But he was not only fiercely pro-Israel but opposed to Carter's China recognition. The nature of this interview, particularly the tone and statements made by reporters, can never be summarized in a few words. A few examples will have to suffice. Stone voiced great concern at Carter's recognition of China, at its timing. "In the future we may need a reliable ally and a reliable base" he said (meaning Taiwan). "Now what avenues of redress do you have? You have mentioned a few. Let me call your attention — a short list that Senator Javits, who is considered to be one of the best Senate lawyers, has drawn up" said Herman of CBS and listed some. But, predictably, Bernard Kalb provided emotional prods that even for a TV reporter must be considered unusual. "Senator, you seem to suggest that President Carter slipped one passed Congress while Congress was home and the holidays were on. Now, is that correct?" Stone: "Yes". Kalb asked "And what does that do for the sense of cooperation required to get momentum going on legislation expected by him?" "Congressional cooperation for Carter would be hard on other matters."\*

Later Kalb continued to interrupt to take the issue to the Mideast "Now on the Mideast —" he tried to interrupt once; the next time there was a pause he jumped in "Does it complicate the American search for peace in the Middle East?". Stone therefore went on to talk about the need to allow "buffer territory" for Israel, that "reliability" and "trustworthiness" of allies was lessened by this move, etc. Germond, of *The Washington Star*, finally interrupted to ask "Do you really see any parallel between our stake in Israel and [the relationship with] Taiwan... aren't they totally different things?"

Kalb however was not to be denied his purpose of steering the China issue to the Middle East. At one point, he angrily remarked "You know what we are doing right now is concentrating on China and *I would suspect that's precisely what the Carter*

\* That "cooperation" was for the many Carter proposals, in the nation's interest, still languishing in Congress.

*administration would like us to do*, and I think we ought to take a minute to review what happened this past week, Vance's unsuccessful mission in the Middle East. Now, I travelled with the Secretary to both Egypt and Israel and certainly in Israel, there was a sense of outrage as to what they regarded as enormous pressure by the Carter administration on Israel to make *new* concessions. Now is that the way you, as a Senator, saw it back here, and what was the sentiment on the (Capitol) Hill about this?". It must be understood that this was the veteran journalist, expert correspondent on foreign affairs, the leading expert at CBS, speaking.\*

Even Stone appeared somewhat embarrassed at the sharpness of Kalb's comment and inquiry, and said he "would rather not dwell on recent failures", that "it's much too important for finger pointing". "Yes, but somebody has to analyze" interrupted the angry Bernard Kalb. And so Stone proceeded to do so.

On January 6, 1979, CBS had its annual review: *Looking Back* with experts Walter Cronkite and Eric Severeid. The lights were suitably soft, the location was suitably impressive to hear words of great profundity and wisdom — the Woodrow Wilson library, complete with a working fireplace in the background. They spoke softly and the camera close-ups of the faces were highly impressive. Severeid said there were too many laws, that was the problem, it required public reaction like Proposition 13. If there was any tyranny in our lives, he said, it was bureaucracy *not corporations, or the military*. Media, they then decided, was not responsible for using information from "leaks", because it was handed to them. Severeid came up with another gem; "You cannot go by moral feelings in government" They reminisced about the good old days when the Third World countries were docile; to all intents and purposes these were two neo-colonialists, thinking back when Dem Guys accepted the superiority of the U.S..

These great minds were suitably modest, of course, at the end. They know that Bureaucracy was the culprit, not Big Business or the Military. They knew that media was not to blame, that it maintained excellent standards. But it was fitting for their image to end with humble words. "I am such a rotten prophet" sighed Severeid. "My crystal ball... is clouded" admitted Cronkite. That took care of any wrong predictions they may have made during the year.

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Carter's Economic Plan which had been ridiculed and crushed before it began, was not just a shot in the dark. A similar plan was in effect in Britain. American media knew that and it was working very well until a few months later when it suddenly died.

The Labor Party was in power and Prime Minister James Callaghan had worked a minor miracle in subduing Britain's frightening inflation rate from 27% down to 7% through such voluntary wage-price guidelines.

But then Britain had one or the worst winters in history. Some also claimed that there had been dirty tricks by "certain forces" inciting Labor unions during those bitterly cold months. Labor strikes returned abandoning the voluntary guidelines; the public became furious. By March 1979 the Conservatives felt they had a chance and

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\* Bernard Kalb was to be elevated by Reagan to become the State Department Spokesman.



could win on a "no confidence" vote. They did, on March 29, by just one vote (ironically one pro-Callaghan MP was very ill and could not attend). A "no confidence" vote leads to a general election. And at that general election Margaret Thatcher and the Conservative Party came into power.

Mrs. Thatcher and her colleagues did a remarkable job in selling themselves in the campaign to the British voter; but the American Op-Cons' years of experience and expertise in image-making clearly provided at least the inspiration.

Britain was, through Anglo-American commercial interests, and through Anglo-American media, virtually the 51st state by now for the American Power Cartel. But this was said to be first British election in which American style electioneering methods were used. Britain did not permit unlimited political advertising (as yet anyway) but friendly media coverage over time was just as effective if not more. Britain's liberal trends of recent years had been gradually halted, not only from American influence but by a coincidental development of a "color" problem. Immigrants (voluntary and those seeking political asylum) had suddenly increased the colored population to nearly 5%.\*

Initially, colored workers from Commonwealth countries had been encouraged to come to take menial jobs that the British labor force no longer wanted, but now both the size and the nature of immigrant flow worried many of the British.

Many wanted restrictions and the extremists were seeking extradition of the immigrants.

What made it particularly annoying to the lower economic strata in Britain was that though economic growth was slowing down, the coloreds, instead of staying on menial jobs, were now often moving ahead of them, many becoming quite affluent.

The economic slump following the OPEC oil price hike then hit Britain hard at a time when North Sea oil benefit was not as yet available. Exploitation, as elsewhere, had also taken over under cover of OPEC price hikes. Inflation was higher than in most countries. And so, the American highly publicized "grass roots revolt" against taxes found many willing ears in Britain.

There still were differences in life and thought between the Americans and the British but in turning to the "New Conservative" base, the British masses were behaving in much the same way as the American masses. In its fast evolution from a feudal state to what was now derisively called a Welfare State, much of British lower class had moved from decrepit poverty to the relative affluence of middle income (therefore middle class) in just a few decades since World War 2.

This emergence, while most satisfying, was not without its disappointments. Now that they were of the mainstream, there was no British Empire and its shining glory; worse, there were taxes that seemed to grow by the year; and there were the 5% coloreds, *ipso facto* equally British.

The appeal of being "conservative" had, as it did in the U.S. (though perhaps less dramatically), a status appeal. They too were willing to call "halt" to a "Welfare State" — now it no longer advanced them socio-economically, it took from them in taxes. Many of the traditional Tories and upper class, other than the more perceptive ones, generally went along with the "New Conservatives", as being merely an extension of the old party.

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\* In the American "melting pot", Hispanic-Americans are the largest ethnic group of all. English-Americans have always been a minority, even in early America when German-Americans were the largest ethnic group.

Of course not all the British were ruled by such considerations. There were still noticeable differences between the American and British cultures in many ways, but the speed with which Op-Con values had swept Britain, overriding even traditional Conservative values, reflected the skills of present day image-making and the lethal power of media.

These differences were reflected even in the comments of MP St John-Stevas at the 1981 Tory Reform Group when he said, "Who would have thought that we could live to see the day when economic materialism could deck itself in Tory colors and claim to be, not only the authentic voice of conservatism, but its only legitimate manifestation? Yet this is precisely the theme of what has been arrogantly styled 'new conservatism'".

The seeds had of course been sown more than thirty years ago so it should not have come as such a surprise...\*

There was much that both the U.S. and Britain could have learnt from each other productively as they had in some ways over the years. But now the marriage of Anglo-American Op-Con commercial values as early American thinker Noah Webster would have said, "stamped the wrinkles of decrepit age upon the bloom of youth".

The Labor Party and the Liberals, on the other hand, were proceeding to destroy each other now in much the same way as the opposition to the American Op-Cons did. It was, to say the least, an odd coincidence.

Despite the promised utopia of Mrs. Thatcher and her Big Business backers, the British economy nosedived in her first term. The Anglo-American Op-Cons were trying (test marketing?) the "trickle down" economic theory. This theory held that if you let Big Business make a lot of money, they will pass on some of that prosperity to others.

It was, of course, feudalism with Big Business as the new Aristocrats and it was not working. It was what Nixon had tried gingerly and Reagan would establish in the near future; allow unemployment to rise to "cool the economy". As in the U.S., advertising expenditures, however, were allowed to soar. And, evidently, as in the U.S., the unspoken intent was to make the Have-nots so preoccupied with survival, that they too would become obsessed with material issues and develop greater respect for Big Business. The "trickle-down" theory would soon take unemployment to over 13%.

But Thatcher's image-makers banked on the Op-Con victory in 1980 in the U.S. which would help her and Reagan's election did that in many ways. Thatcher's strong anti-Russian comments, her hard stand on the new nuclear missiles from the U.S., after 1980 her close friendship with Reagan, soon helped the British feel that they were not just poor cousins hanging on to America's coat-tails.

Discussions with Russia were by then to be scuttled; the ground rules could not be laid for such discussions because Britain and France insisted their own nuclear warheads must not be part of the U.S. vs Russia count. American hawks fully agreed of course. Russia did not.

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\* "Mrs. Thatcher has been in the hands of PR men more than any other British politician" wrote Derek Ingrams from London. "Labor MPs have accused the Tories of packaging her like a bar of soap ... Mrs. Shirley Wilhams, Labor's Minister of Education ... is the daughter of Vera Britten and the eminent political scientist Sir George Catline; Mrs. Thatcher is the daughter of a grocer. There would be nothing remarkable ... except Mrs. William displays the quieter, *class-free* personality". This should not really have surprised Mr. Ingrams, either. That is how it is, these days.

Whatever else could and should be said against the communists, the NATO argument had little merit on the issue. Britain and France could be blown to smithereens on their own in a confrontation with Russia, so the claim of nuclear arsenals for defense of their individual countries was ludicrous. But while claiming to have British nuclear power (miniscule though it was) for Britain's own defense, Mrs Thatcher was willing to make dangerous threats as she did just two days before the British elections in June 1983, when she said she would not hesitate to 'press the button' in defense of a NATO ally. It showed that Britain's arsenals were not just for Britain's defense.

In reality, Mrs Thatcher did not have a button to press — even the new Pershing II missiles, due for installations in Britain in November 1983 were American missiles, paid for by American taxpayers and whose 'button' would be in American hands.

The nuclear disarmament movement in Britain, as in the rest of Europe, had committed idealists, who hated war and killing; there were even some who understood the Big Business of War; knew the Op-Con intent was to make the economy of NATO so deeply dependent on military expenditure that for economic reasons, no one would raise questions, as the years went by, on higher military spendings, that a critical fringe benefit from War economies would be the ability to get "respect" from the rest of the world, regardless of issues of right and wrong, "respect" in the same sense that the gun slinging Wild West cowboy of the movies demanded "respect".

So aged British colonialists were brought to the 1981 Tory Convention to concur with American Op-Con strategists that they too had followed a somewhat similar line of "The Big Stick" in the good old days. It all added up to a flavor of "traditional Conservative values". Britain's Op-Con hawks were soon to share honors with Reagan in a war of words against Russia.

There was just one question that was never asked: if the Russians were so powerful militarily, even ahead of the U.S. (as Reagan claimed, on more than one occasion) *what were the Russians waiting for?* Why did they not start a war *now* and win it before the U.S.'s new nuclear arsenals were ready? What were the Russians waiting for? To give the West a sporting chance?

There was one major fear for peace loving people; the anti-nuclear movement that was building up in Europe would not sustain if the Op-Con strategists were able to convince people that (1) with military superiority, their own lives would be safer and (2) more military expenditures (of their own government or the U.S. taxpayers) would create more jobs.

There is no group more easily exploitable, politically, than the selfish and the wholly pragmatic. And it was clear that apart from the committed minority, most of the "grass roots" support against the arms race grew in Europe only *after* Reagan had talked about a "limited nuclear war" in 1981 which would have put European lives in danger before others, especially with the new U.S. missiles to come to Britain and Germany.

This weakness in commitment to principles was even more apparent after the British 1983 elections. Mrs Thatcher had fallen in popularity all through 1981 and 1982. Then came her military victory in the Falkland Islands. Rule Britannia, said the voters. She won by a thumping majority. And Kohl would also win in West Germany, with proclaimed subservience to American hawks, and their formula for economic revival.

In a 1983 interview, former British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan told



reporter Max Hastings "What the Labor Party had failed to realize is that the mass of the people don't like being called the proletariat". Whatever his politics and performance in office, the 95 year old former PM was right on target with that, in more ways than one.

Even while Carter held office, much of northern Europe was successfully under the directions of the Op-Cons. After Carter, West Germany's new Chancellor Kohl would be a dutiful Reagan aide; France's peculiar socialist government, with a devastated economy, would seek Op-Con acceptance in the Big Business of War; strangely the self-destructive Russians would irritate the Scandinavians with continuous, mysterious submarine manoeuvres which though never found, would understandably create fears and animosity. But then, by now even Sweden, that one European nation with the best record of civilized political and economic attitudes, was also turning Op-Con, in some ways.

And the gentle art of subliminal persuasion was now a thrilling new import for European commercial professions. Multinationals introduced the practice of determining attitudes and beliefs and then steering them in the desired direction as an important element in marketing. European Governments had been learning this too.

In a professional journal, *European Research*, for instance, (September '78 issue) European researchers Alan de Vulpian and Ann-Marie de Vaivre advised of current trends "Business and Government are increasingly obliged to take anthro-sociological change more and more explicitly into account. Changes in Society, evolving aspirations, mentalities and attitudes, the upheaval in values and modifications in social structures and balances of forces, all these concern them... Some corporations are clearly aware of the general implications of this new requirement. For example we recently heard senior managers of one of the leading multinationals declare that ... today... the crucial challenges to which answers are going to be found... are of a societal nature". Europe's Big Business and politicians were already into the latest American techniques to spread the dragnet and draw it in...

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The rumble of revolution and unbridled violence was erupting in several countries by 1978. Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos were no longer "hot copy" in the U.S., except for occasional reports of massive genocide and mass exodus of unfortunate millions. The Third World countries had noted the Vietnam War but also the aftermath of that War. Deformities ravaged the millions who had come out alive. Among the poisons used in American bombing had been Agent Orange; just how powerful a killer this was, became apparent from reports that American pilots carrying the poison bombs to devastate Vietnam and Cambodia were now found, just from that exposure, to be suffering from cancer. The U.S. had refused to pay for War reparation to the victorious communists of Vietnam. The stark desolation, the bitter tragedies of War years first with France, then with the U.S. had apparently turned the once peaceful and quiet inhabitants of the former Indo-China sub-continent into fierce, even demented killers. In a national campaign to "clean" their land of pro-American elements, many thousands of the unhappy inhabitants had been killed, and surviving masses attempted to find safety in neighboring lands. Frantic and hysterical millions became "boat people". Many thousands drowned in overcrowded boats. Refugee camps in neighboring Thailand were soon also the center of mass

death through starvation. It was many months before the plight of these blighted millions was recognised, quotas of the surviving "boat people" were allowed into some of the European countries, Canada and the U.S., and food supplies for the starving millions in the refugee camps began to be dispatched.

In other Third World countries, periodically, there was a successful overthrow of tyrannical regimes. However, quite often, the new people's government found itself in dire trouble through the continuing efforts at sabotage by the deposed powers. It was not only U.S. satellites who were involved in despotism. Soviet Russia was also similarly active, now especially in the emerging African nations. Each Superpower claimed it was involved in a country only because the other had involvement. Angola had been the typical victim in 1975. For the very few countries that managed, despite the odds, to form a popular local government without the overshadowing control of a Superpower, there were the enormous problems of a raped economy to be healed, and the even greater problem, often, of the peculiar psychology of the new leadership. Usually, the freedom fighters expected to be rewarded with leadership positions in the new government. Often brave and idealistic fighters, they could lack both ability and experience for their new positions. Frequently, power corrupted, secret ambitions emerged. Nations riddled with all the ills of an inferiority complex inflicted by foreign powers over generations have, as we have seen, serious, self-destructive trends, not the least of which is yearning for ego gratifications among its leadership, and those aspiring to leadership.

The CIA hearings in 1975/6, severely restricted though they were, had resulted in a modicum of restraint to be practiced for a while, compared to the unbridled extremism of the past. But if there were more restrictions placed by Carter it was apparently a difference of degree, not kind. On this issue, Carter was obviously now either of similar mind as the Power Cartel or too weak politically to stir yet another hornet's nest. President Marcos of the Philippines had used torture and killing as a normal practice against dissenters for years. Amnesty International, headquartered in London, had accumulated evidence of killings in the thousands, and brutal forms of torture. In the Carter Administration, a more honest assessment had been made and the U.S. Government now admitted that tortures, indiscriminate arrests, and killings occurred. Marcos claimed officially to be a friend of the United States, and that he believed in the "democratic process" — the standard concession that allowed dictators to function — and received substantial aid from the U.S. And yet, in practice, even the basic democratic processes were contemptuously tossed aside. During the recent elections, for instance, Marcos's leading opponent for the presidency (Senator Aquino) was kept safely behind bars (shot dead on his return in 1983 from the U.S. after medical treatment). Mr. Carter said he deplored Marcos's excesses, but the U.S. had military bases in the Philippines and not many countries allowed the U.S. to have its arsenals on their soil anymore. So the U.S. Government continued to allow Marcos military aid for his own government, as much as \$133 million in 1978; in the past six years, a total of \$750 million in military aid alone had been given to President Marcos — and that figure, it may be noted, was by official estimates.

In Chile, as we have noted earlier, President Allende had been elected by a clear majority, overthrowing a corrupt regime, which had been "friendly" to the U.S. And in 1973, Allende was killed. The 1975 Senate hearings had shown that the Nixon administration, the CIA and the Big Business money (IT&T was named) had contributed to the coup and the extinction of the Allende regime. With this coup, General Pinochet had been installed. Pinochet immediately announced that he loved



Democracy so much that he wanted all of U.S. Big Business to return to Chile. Soon Amnesty International was receiving voluminous evidence of mass tortures and killings of dissenters under the Pinochet regime. In 1975 alone, it reported that 95,000 people were arrested by the regime, and 5,000 political prisoners killed. Allende's former assistant was killed in the streets of Washington D.C. Finally, Carter and Ted Kennedy had managed to put a stop to military and economic aid to the Pinochet regime. But that was officially. Soon, it was learnt, Chile was receiving \$800 million a year from American Big Business. The President of Citicorp (City Bank of New York) in response to the disclosures, had the standard answer "On principles of our country, this can be done....freedom of business, free enterprise". In 1978, the United Nations report said that just that year, 985 were known to have been killed in Chile, torture was very frequent and thousands of political dissidents had "disappeared". The pattern was no different in many Latin American countries — El Salvador, Ecuador, Guatemala, Argentina\*. In these so-called "banana republics" of America, even the banana were virtually monopolized by U.S. conglomerates like the United Fruit Company and former CIA operatives had revealed in PBS programs how they had operated there, even successfully penetrating labor unions (sometimes even taking over union leadership). The "Monroe Doctrine" had been used frequently by the U.S. at the turn of the century to invade and set up suitable governments. In Nicaragua, a dynasty had been set up by the United States; on the grounds that a strong anti-Communist regime was necessary to guard the U.S. interests, the U.S. had picked General Somoza. The disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion against Cuba had been launched from Nicaragua. Somoza, very vocal for democracy and free enterprise, had allowed American Big Business free reign in his country. And concurrently, had proceeded to use that "free enterprise" to corner for himself and his family, just about all of the industries and agricultural enterprises. After General Somoza Sr., Luis and Anastasio Jr., his two sons, sequentially took over the Government, the vast fortunes and enterprise, and added to them. Opposition grew, Somoza quickly resorted to the military arsenals that America had provided him with. Reports of tortures, mass killings became so common that even the U.S. Government did not deny they occurred. Student protesters disappeared daily, only to be found days later with amputated parts of the body, dead in a gutter, bearing unmistakable signs of torture. Amnesty International reported this frequently, protested strongly to Anastasio Somoza against his methods of "teaching them a lesson". In September, 1978, the people rebelled *en masse*. So fierce was the people's rebellion that at one point it seemed that they might win, despite the vast military power of the Somoza regime. But Somoza triumphed — he shelled and bombed the populace to surrender. Despite the strong American Power Cartel attempts to get the Carter Administration to think well of Somoza, Carter refused. And it so happened that Somoza's victory was shortlived. The people's rebellion grew stronger in stages. By the middle of 1979,

\* U.S. media's idea of objectivity was rather obviously revealed in the case of Timerman, a Jewish journalism-cum-civil rights activist in Argentina. Timerman finally escaped from the horrors of Argentinian incarceration, and was hailed as a great hero by U.S. media when he arrived in the U.S. There was even a major movie made about him. Then Timerman went to Israel to settle, but decided to be different, instead. He wrote a book severely critical of Israel's policies. As he was a major celebrity, media could not entirely ignore his book. But *The Washington Post* took the unusual step of using not one of its regular staff but an Israeli journalist to review Timerman's book for the *Post's* Sunday review. Needless to say, he was severely critical of Timerman and his book.



even his U.S. allies were advising him to give up and leave. In July 1979 he finally left, taking with him billions of dollars of the nation's fortunes and sought refuge in Florida. The scandal of harboring this obvious criminal, who had fled with his country's wealth, was felt not worth it, and the Carter administration advised him to seek refuge elsewhere. The Nicaraguan revolutionaries seemed to appreciate Carter's lack of enthusiasm for Somoza, and were soon attempting to establish normal, friendly relations with Washington. But in terms of alignment, it was all too late. It was Cuba which had aided the revolutionaries when they needed it against Somoza and it was Cuban influence that would be uppermost in the new Nicaraguan Republic.

By the time Somoza had fled his country, the Shah of Iran had fled Iran some months before. Historians will one day wonder at the remarkable similarity of events in two nations, separated by over 10,000 miles. And they may well wonder why the United States, after so many examples, especially two within months of each other, could not learn how disastrous its foreign policy had been for so many years. Iran would now dominate the news for nearly two years.

And in that crazy turmoil, the Iranian revolutionaries would play right into Op-Con hands.

U.S. media played a critical political role as with its incessant drumbeat, it swayed national emotions through events in Iran into the Op-Con camp, with far greater ramifications perhaps than we can appreciate from this proximity in time.

(xxv)

Iran's new revolutionary government did claim to want good relations with the U.S. Three days after the Shah's last Prime Minister Bhaktiar had fled and the revolutionaries had taken charge, Iran's temporary Charges D'Affaires Shahriar Rouhani appeared on ABC's *Good Morning America* (Feb 14, 1979) and said "We want to be friends with America; we will sell oil, we will need technical education and so on, but we do not need sophisticated torture and exploitation. We can be friends as equals, not slave and master and as long as the U.S. does not ferment trouble in Iran". Much earlier, in May 1978, Khomeini had expressed the same opinion. In fact he had repeated it on CBS's *Face The Nation*, broadcast January 14, 1979.

It is possible, of course, that even without the madness that followed, relations between the U.S. and Iran would not have been friendly. The American public, chastened by Vietnam and Watergate, but revived by the growing "New Conservative" media entertainment and news reporting, was yearning again for the old euphoric state, the belief that the world looked up with reverence and servility towards the U.S.. The Iranian mullahs and their committed followers did not look up to the U.S. or Western culture. If anything, they saw themselves as morally and culturally superior. It would have taken a great deal of effort on their side not to reveal how they felt, and for Americans, expecting subservience, not to be irritated.

As it was, media's extreme hostility to the revolutionaries, succeeded in quickly destroying whatever chances there might have been for even a lukewarm relationship. Many Americans, who initially even sympathized with the revolutionaries for the CIA excesses and U.S. policies of the past, were to be quickly turned off by the persuasive power of media, and the wild confrontations that ensured completed the change in the America mood to acceptance, even agreement with the old-style neo-colonial attitudes

in foreign policy. The Iran issue, of course, also completed the destruction of Carter, and greatly aided Op-Con strategists in installing Ronald Reagan in the White House.

It is very likely, also, that Iran would have had much of its internal turmoil even without its confrontation with the U.S.. After virtually all revolutions there are many Have-Nots who had participated only in order to become the Haves; some at least who were entirely hypocritical in their religious fervor, others quite corrupt, yearning for power and high office, at least some who did it all without being consciously aware of their own real objectives. After the fallout between the Western educated revolutionaries, the "liberals", and especially after the terrorist bombing in Tehran in June 1981, which killed 72 of their top government officials, many incompetent and morally corrupt, donning the garb of Islamic revolutionaries, found opportunities for importance inside and outside Iran.

On the other hand, there was our media. We must briefly consider the role of U.S. media, during and after the revolution. Media initially ignored the revolutionary movement, even during the first few months of the revolution. When it did finally recognize how serious and powerful the opposition to the Shah was, it repeated the Shah's own assessment: it was an "Islamic Marxist" movement, instigated by the Russians\*. When Khomeini was recognized by media as the leader, he was immediately a "fanatic" or "black robed mullah", against "modernization" (*New York Times*, May 18) desirous mainly of stopping "reforms that have permitted women to attend universities" (*Newsweek*, May 22, 1978). Khomeini and his adherents used "gangland tactics" said *Time* magazine (Sept 4, 1979).

Media's anger against Khomeini and his followers was to become most fierce after November 1; on that day as Walter Cronkite would say more than once in his TV and radio shows, — Khomeini "finally admitted" that the Islamic Movement would not recognize Israel, though it claimed to respect Jews. Oil supplies to Israel (Iran was one of Israel's main suppliers) would be stopped by the revolutionary government if it came to power.

For obvious reasons only a few representative examples of media reporting can be reviewed here. Major media was then, and in the future, to be considered "liberal". When anti-war sentiments were high during the Vietnam war, major media had clearly and often voiced strong disapproval of interference in the internal affairs of other countries, of exploitation and excesses even of Big Business and the CIA.

After world media had confirmed that the Shah had been brutal, corrupt, it was common knowledge that it was the CIA who had reinstalled the Shah after his ouster in 1953 despite the fact that a democratic government had replaced the Shah. The Shah's police force — especially the dreaded SAVAK — were brutal all through the ensuing years until the revolution. Iran's economy, far from being flourishing, was in chaos, in the red, despite the enormous oil wealth which was apparently being used to enrich a few, especially the Shah's own entourage, while huge military purchases were being made from the U.S. (currently \$20 billion on order); a nation historically self-sufficient agriculturally was importing foodstuff; inflation was out of hand. Most important of all, the revolution was clearly that of all the people, of all levels in society

\* When the Shah's Press Secretary switched to the revolutionaries, he held a press conference in London in which he displayed documents purporting to prove that many U.S. journalists had been in the pay of the Shah. Even if true it would not explain the degree of hostility of media establishment policy from the start towards the revolution.

who were apparently so savaged that they were willing to march through the streets, inviting bullets for months on end (in all, according to the revolutionaries, over 60,000 would be killed in the last eight months of the revolution alone). It would be hard to find a similar example of absolute monarchy and tyrannical rule in recent history, except perhaps for Samozoa of Nicaragua.

It could be argued (as it has been often) that what followed the Shah's rule was equally if not more absolute and tyrannical. The point overlooked is that did we ever give the revolutionaries a chance to be anything other than fiercely hostile? *And was that accidental or intentional?*

Walter Cronkite (CBS) would expound from the start on the dangers posed by the revolutionaries, first on CBS-TV *Evening News*, then enlarge on that in his CBS Radio Broadcasts, referring often to the fact that the revolutionaries would stop oil supplies to Israel.

In his CBS radio commentary (a special extended version on November 9 and 10, 1978) Cronkite talked about the coalition that opposed the Shah and made things increasingly dangerous for him: the communists, the Muslim orthodox, the students. The Shah, he said, is fond of the West, and his attempts to bring "Iran into the 20th century" are being fought. Oil is important to the West; yet the Carter Human Rights campaign "according to one Iranian diplomat" has forced the Shah to become lenient towards the opposition, allowing them to become powerful; the situation is getting critical, said Cronkite, and unfortunately after Vietnam, U.S. military intervention even in such a situation might not be favored by the American people (for some confusing reason, in early December, Cronkite was again to announce "After many days of refusing to comment Khomeini confirmed that he would not recognize Israel and 'we will not sell oil to Israel'").

*The Washington Post* (November 3, 1978) had an editorial on Iran: "The Shah has now made his move — dismissing parliament and appointing a military government with instructions to restore order. It seems to us about *the only thing* he could have done at this time. *The considerable concession he made* had been hurled back in his face. The Muslim zealot who runs the principal opposition movement from exile in France has responded... by refusing to compromise... on the Shah rests the principal responsibility for preventing Iran from descending into the sort of utter chaos that would all but wipe out *the major gain he has achieved in national welfare and regional stability*". (Italics added).

There was another piece in *The Washington Post* that same day, by syndicated columnists Evans and Novak. Carter had refused the Shah's request for more riot-control gear and they said, "That is merely icing on the cake of the [Carter] administration's human rights policies which have endangered U.S. relations with its allies all over the world". Now *The Washington Post* and Nixon thought alike.

In the meanwhile, *The New York Times* reporter Flora Lewis had been for an interview with Khomeini in Paris. She returned to write that she had been made to cover her head, also made to remove her shoes and made to "kneel" before the Ayotollah. It was a comment that was quoted by media across the country, presumably all still ignorant (or pretending to be ignorant) of the Iranian custom of removing shoes inside the home and sitting on carpets, squatting or kneeling.

In her interviews with Jimmy and Rosslyn Carter (broadcast December 14, 78) on ABC, Barbara Walters first talked of Egypt-Israel relations, admitting that she had been in touch that morning with Israeli leaders "and they said Mr Sadat's new claims ... bother them, especially his refusing to exchange ambassadors", that the Israelis



were very concerned that the U.S. was siding with Egypt, instead of being neutral. "Not true" said Carter. The Camp David Agreement was for self-government for the West Bank by 1979 and withdrawal of Israel from Egyptian territory within that time too, he said. Israelis did not now agree with that set plan and so Sadat could not be held to the exchange of Ambassadors, Carter said. Then, still keeping a smile, Walters had gone on to Iran. "Human Rights undermine our allies according to Kissinger and could this not be the possible cause of undermining the Shah of Iran?" Then with great sentiment she asked, "You and Mrs Carter have been fond of the Shah and Empress Farah. Last year you were in Iran, celebrating New Year's eve with them (a slide of that toast with the Shah appeared on the screen through the magic of television). Oil from Iran is important to the U.S. and Israel. What are you going to do about the problem then?" she asked. Then she repeated "What exactly are you going to do?" (Walters' smile had vanished by now). Walters then switched the topic again to Israel. Senator Byrd, she said, had expressed the view that if Israel continued to build settlements on occupied areas, it could lose U.S. aid. "Do you agree?" On Carter's response — that Byrd had a right to his opinion and that it did not necessarily reflect the Administration's view — she probed again. But did Carter agree? And again. It would seem as if this was one of the critical issues on which she had been asked to get Carter's response when she spoke to Israeli leaders that morning.\*

On January 5, for the regular *Speak Out* section on WNBC TV (wholly owned New York station of NBC network), the question was put to "the man and woman on the street" to ask what they felt about Iran. Young and old, they told Carl Stokes (reporter) they wanted the U.S. Government to support the Shah more strongly. Some said the U.S. should intervene militarily and ensure supply of oil, others said the U.S. had obligations to Israel, and it must ensure the Shah stayed in power, despite what the Iranian people may want.

Commercial TV in the U.S. was finally to get an interview with Ayatollah Khomeini. On January 14, 1979, CBS's *Face the Nation* broadcast that interview. It was taped when the Shah was about to leave and the Bakhtiar government was in the process of being formed. "Regarding our policy with the American Government — if they stop supporting this illegal government then we do not have any opposition to the American people; and also we say to the American government, if they stop this support, we will treat them with friendship and justice" said Khomeini.

Cronkite (CBS, January 17) suggested Khomeini saw himself as "demi-god" and was a "self-styled strong man". ABC (January 17) said he was "ambitious". On NBC (January 16), the evening *Nightly News* carried — as part of a special report through the week — segments of an earlier interview of President Carter with NBC's anchorman John Chancellor. Before the taped interview was shown, Chancellor briefed the audience of his own shock at Carter's attitude. Then the taped interview with Carter was aired. In it, the Chancellor suggested the gravity of the loss of the Shah and U.S.'s 'inaction'. "The Shah", said Chancellor "was the Policeman of the Persian Gulf", to which President Carter responded that it was not necessary to have a "Policeman", that it was a fallacious premise. He added that the Persian people had been able to govern themselves for 2,500 years which was 2,300 years more than the

\* On March 4, 1979, on ABC's *Issues & Answers*, Begin was asked if it was right for him, a leader of a foreign government, to say he would go "over the head of the U.S. President to the American people". Begin became furious at the question. "Where is Barbara Walters?" he shouted. It appeared that ABC had promised Begin that Walters would do the interviewing but she was out of town.

United States. Clearly angry at this, Chancellor said "I am compelled to argue and remind you that they have been rioting for a year now". Carter: "But that is within the constitutional framework. They have rebelled and they will work out the government best suited to them". All media was to jump on Carter for these remarks over the next several days.

The "panel discussions" on TV among the columnists and correspondents allowed them more freedom to express their opinions, shed the act of reporting. One of the most watched is a weekly syndicated program, produced by *The Washington Post* called *Agronsky & Company* in which various very prominent columnists discuss the news events of the preceding week and express opinions. The January 6, 1979 broadcast already reflected the extreme passions among the leading columnists. The political "image" of these leading journalists ranged from the very "conservative" (George Will, Killpatrick) to highly "conservative" (Hugh Sidey) to moderater "liberal" (Agronsky) to more "liberal" (Elizabeth Drew) to very "liberal" (Carl Rowan). Rowan, a black, was supposedly against all exploitation, furiously against prejudice, for equality, human rights, angry at military waste.

But on January 6, another side of Rowan was making itself heard. On this occasion Rowan, who had just been very critical of U.S. interference in Angola, was now fiercely critical of Carter for *not* intervening militarily in Iran. After Cuba in 1962, this situation in Iran is most critical, he said. "Confrontation is essential in Iran"; we should confront and protect "our vested interests", Israel is dependent on Iran for 70% of its oil (it was in fact 60%) and South Africa gets 90% of its oil from Iran (South Africa's apartheid policies have been Rowan's favorite subject of denunciation for years); Rowan added he knew from past interviews with the Shah that it was critical to keep Khomeini out of the country.

By January 20, *Agronsky & Company* were commenting on how backward Islamic laws were, how backward the Iranian people were. Should they have the right to govern themselves? They fiercely attacked Carter's statement to NBC's John Chancellor about the Iranian's right and tradition of self-rule. "50% of the people are illiterate. How can they govern themselves?" asked Sidey. Agronsky said that if the Islamic Republic were to rule, using the Quran, they will chop hands off thieves and stone adulterers. George Will said essentially what Sidey had — with all that illiteracy "what is this self-government that Carter talked about?". At no point did the panelists even mention the religious state of Israel, nor the fact that while illiteracy in the U.S. was currently estimated to be 23%, it had been over 90% at the time of the American Revolutionary War. Significantly only one member of the panel did not have strong statements against the Iranian revolutionaries; Elizabeth Drew, usually very vocal and critical of Muslim seclusion of women, was now critical of U.S. "show of force" in Saudi Arabia, and even suggested that democratic rights of the Iranian people were important.

There was the voice of the "other America" that were heard occasionally, but just barely. Former Attorney-General Ramsey Clark had returned from Iran in late Fall 1978, to tell the U.S. government that the opposition to the Shah was almost total, that Khomeini support was spread to 99% of Iranians and that U.S. policy should carefully take heed of this reality, that he had met Khomeini in Paris and had found him a very religious and honest man. President Carter had also appointed former Under Secretary of State George Ball to study and report on Iran. Ball presented a report that was wholly contrary to what the Op-Cons and media wanted. Ball said the Shah had been an incredible tyrant, that the will of the Iranian people should be respected by



America. Professor James Bell of the University of Texas, considered an expert on Iran even by the U.S. Government, frequently attempted to voice disapproval (at least in the later stages of the revolution) of the media attitude towards Khomeini. Others sought the "Letters to the Editor" columns in newspapers — when they could have such letters published. Associate Professor James Cockcraft of Rutgers University, New Jersey, wrote (Jan 16 '79) to the Editor of *The New York Times* giving details of his recent talks with Khomeini in Paris. "I do this in the interest of the truth and out of respect for the Iranian people's right to govern themselves". He wrote about Khomeini's "democratic" views on women, the rights of Jews, etc. "We of the West run a grave risk of pushing the people of Iran beyond even their courageous tolerance of hardship and misunderstanding when we accuse their highest religious authority...of bigotry or savagery".

On January 23, CBS had *Who Lost Iran?* a News Special program on Iran, with Walter Cronkite and senior CBS news correspondents. At the end of their coverage they had a discussion for which they had invited Professor James Bell, the acknowledged expert on Iran.

Cronkite outlined the events in Iran, then gave comments and conclusions. The Iranian military disliked Khomeini, but Khomeini had "extracted" support from the President of the Shah's Regency Council. Muslim fervor was on the rise in various countries, from Indonesia to Morocco. They see nothing wrong with turning back the clock. They were "anti-American, anti-Israel and it might be mentioned, anti-communist".\* The oil crisis as a result of Iran's discontinuance of oil supplies was severe (oil workers had joined the revolution). Cronkite said Energy Secretary Schlesinger had said gas stations in U.S. may have to be shut down and rationing imposed. Israel's needs were critical and, according to the commitment made by Kissinger, the U.S. must supply Israel (Israel had in fact recently announced it had a six-month reserve). Cronkite then talked about the loss in trade and foreign exchange through the Iranian turmoil. Iran had been the biggest buyer of American arms but even the \$12,000,000,000 remaining from this order would now be cancelled by the revolutionaries. With the right inflexion of disbelief and ridicule, Cronkite mentioned Carter's contention that the Iranian people had ruled themselves for 2,500 years.

Cronkite had apparently decided (as Managing Editor of CBS News) that the catch phrase for the report should be *Who Lost Iran?* He now asked it — as he did several times through the program "Who Lost Iran? The Secret Service cannot call this its finest hour".

In the discussion that followed, an angry and very emotional Marvin Kalb said "The [U.S.] Administration did not hear the knocking at the door though Israel warned for a year... Recently the Intelligence [report] was also passed on to the President. Many in Congress intend to question the Administration on 'Who Lost Iran?'. It may become the next presidential election issue". Bert Quinn said — as Ford had already said many times — that the Shah felt "It was Carter's fault. Many Iranian people say it was Carter's fault, first by insisting on Human Rights and then not helping the Shah enough". The discussion between the panelists, as usual, was following on these lines of complete understanding and agreement, when suddenly there was a disruptive voice. They had called in an academic expert on Iran and they now no doubt wished they had not. Professor James Bell (now included in the

\* He did not explain what happened to "Islamic Marxists"



discussion) said, "I know my view is that of the minority here but it is my feeling that Western media has been extremely unfair to Khomeini. When he [Khomeini] criticizes the U.S. he in fact criticizes all foreign countries, the communists, the Soviet Union as well. He is an intensely honest, simple man. He is not against the U.S.". There were the looks of surprise, disbelief, irritation on the faces of the CBS panelists as he spoke. And, quickly, Prof. Bell's remarks were abruptly ended at this point by Cronkite saying the time was up. And in his summing up Cronkite concluded "Once again we have failed to control the events in an important part of the world". It was clear that Professor Bell would have a hard time getting back on CBS.

But the opinion of men like Prof. Bell and Prof. Cockcroft were like drops in the ocean, insofar as reaching the American public was concerned. If the Cockcroft letter had been published in the Times, there were many others — of a different view — such as that from a Professor of Farley Dickenson College who said Iran was now certain to go communist. And that was the opinion of the experts in media, of Kissinger and all the rest of the Power Cartel.

At Carter's news conference, Jan 26, an angry Lee Thornton, CBS correspondent, posed a question to Carter "A Congressional sub-Committee reported this week that you and the CIA did not act on information about Iran which would have helped the Shah stay in power. What do you say to that?" Carter replied: "The political situation in Iran is too sensitive for me to comment on it. But what we have done and what we are doing will [later] speak for itself". In an answer to the barrage of criticism on all sides, for not taking military action especially after Bakhtiar resigned, Carter was to say on March 2 "I have no intention of making these foolish actions to the detriment of our nation's interests just to assuage some who criticize me because we have not become actively involved" [in suppressing the Iranian revolution].

*The Washington Post* (February 9) said "Kissinger has attributed the Shah's loss of power in Iran in part to the 'emasculatation' of the Central Intelligence Agency... Kissinger argued that the Carter Administration contributed to the Iranian Revolution by calling for the Shah to act on Human Rights when he was under duress... his views were clear enough to provide fellow Republicans and other administration foes with the intellectual framework to ask 'who lost Iran'". In effect, what the Post asked was "Who was the culprit who was responsible for costing us our colonial hold on another country?"

Another Carter aide now drew ire from media. The U.S. Ambassador to the U. N. Andrew Young disagreed with the sentiments against the revolutionaries expressed by media. One and all, TV and print, flayed Young. The *New York Post* (Murray Kempton, February 13) "Andrew Young claims that meeting Khomeini's aides made him feel America should not panic, that the Iranians are religious and will continue to supply oil and 'they are not going to give up science and the idea of progress'. Young was, of course, singularly in a position to accept without astonishment such reasonable words on the lips of representatives of presumed 16th century religious monomaniac".

More fury was let loose now, as among the first visitors to Khomeini after the revolution was Arafat and when Khomeini had embraced him, voiced his support for the Palestinian cause and the Israel Embassy had been told by Prime Minister Bazargan to close. The editorial in *New York Post* (Feb 20) perhaps best sums up how media felt. It was headlined "An Unholy Alliance". "When will we respond?" the editorial said (in part), "If ever a picture summoned our profound disgust, it was that of Ayatollah Khomeini who believes he is God's messenger, embracing the terrorist

PLO Yasser Arafat who believes he is the liberator, as they sealed with a hairsute kiss their unholy alliance against Israel and the U.S. We have been warned. Arafat's purpose is well known. He stands for the destruction of Israel. He stands for the peace of the rag-tag racists of the so-called United Nations — imposed by his revolver. Khomeini's robe... may lend to him a false religious aura but they cannot disguise what he has written. He brings to his role in Iran a long record of hatred of Israel and America and his hands have already accepted the blood money of Arafat and his paymasters...the outrage we feel towards these false gods and certified killers demands more than Washington's continuing vacillation... We have many weapons, many responses at our disposal in the fight against the excesses of the Khomeinis, the Arafats and the OPEC blackmailers. All we need is the will". The editorial was accompanied by a cartoon of Khomeini as a vulture, captioned 'Bird of Prey'.

On February 14, three days after the Shah's government had been overthrown, there was a jailbreak of enormous proportions in Teheran. About 11,000 prisoners of all types were set loose and many somehow gained access to arms warehouses. Millionaire Ross Perot of Texas later called a press conference and claimed credit for having arranged the jailbreak. When that news reached Iran, furious Iranian mobs rushed to the U.S. Embassy and surrounded it. Other mobs charged on the Intercontinental Hotel (headquarters of foreign press) where there was gun fire. Khomeini sent his (then) trusted aide Yazdi (Foreign Minister) with revolutionary guards to remove the mobs who had threatened the U.S. Embassy. Yazdi did.

But on February 14, NBC's Floyd Kalber had reported it all this way. "90 Americans were arrested, then released" i.e. at the U.S. Embassy. In the meanwhile the rampaging convicts with their arms were being attributed to the revolutionaries. CBS's Ms Aaron said, "In the past the President [Carter] has voiced strong support for the Shah and for the Bhaktiar government...but now the rebel cowboys with more ammunition than they could use were firing at Americans in the Intercontinental Hotel."

February 15, CBS News was at it in its own style. Marvin Kalb used the "informed sources" technique to push anti-Carter sentiments. "Official Administration position is that the Khomeini Government is co-operating fully in the evacuation of the Americans. But informed sources say that..."

Some days earlier Cronkite had reported that a furious crowd had caught a U.S. Military General and cut off his head. That same day others admitted — as did all media the next day — that the crowd attacked the general but a mullah had managed to subdue them and had taken the wounded man to a hospital.\* In the circumstances, it was hardly surprising that the smaller fry among TV network reporters, even the local news announcers felt the Khomeini people were fair game for any and all distortive reporting. WCBS (the wholly owned New York CBS station) said with authority "Chaos in Iran is causing extreme shortages of gas here". "Oil shortages from Iran will make grave problems for us" said David Hartman sadly (ABC, Good Morning America", Feb 13). Even Max Robinson, the new black anchorman for the ABC *Evening News* now said with a straight face (February 15) "one of our largest

\* "One Khomeini supporter voiced regret at Americans leaving in such a way" said CBS (Feb 17). The next day, Charles Kuralt (CBS) had decided to make that a little more general "Some of the revolutionaries voiced concern at the leaving of Americans with their technical knowledge". "Hundreds fleeing in Iran Airlift" screamed the *N.Y. Post* that day "I'll never go back, it was awful" (subhead) "Khomeini people begin their revenge" said Scarborough (NBC Feb 17)."



suppliers of oil — Iran". And on February 12, WNBC's Melba Toliver was announcing grandly that a "2,500 year dynasty was overthrown" as did Chuck Scarborough. When truth is discarded anything goes. For the small fry, it was an occasion to revel in self-expression. James Brady (*New York Post*, Feb 7) had even come up with a George Wallace-like comment, i.e., "after all they (the Iranians) have now done to us, we will no doubt as usual give them billions of dollars in aid".

Carter reiterated on February 12, his earlier belief that, in fact, shortages from discontinuance of Iran oil for the present would not cause any real shortages because the U. S. depended for only 2.5% of its oil requirements on Iran. If any shortages are likely to be felt, he said, they will be towards the Fall of 1979. The President of Standard Oil, Indiana, had told the nation (on CBS' *Face the Nation*) that Iran supplied only 3% of the nation's requirements. All of media had after claiming in November that it was as much as 9%, by now conceded that it was no more than 5%. Yet talk about oil shortages continued to grow.. Those demanding military interventions were pointing to grave consequences, (Cronkite had said thermostats in American homes would have to be adjusted) and that gas prices would be shooting up. In announcing the fall of Bakhtiar, Charles Kuralt (CBS *Sunday Morning News* Feb 11) said, "It's like one of those third acts in Greek tragedies where everything ends in chaos" and had gone on to warn the nation "The collapse of the Bhaktiar Government will of course mean worse inflation in U.S." He did not say why, or how this would be, and neither did all those who repeatedly claimed oil shortages were at hand. Undoubtedly, oil would have to be supplied to Israel by the U.S. — Kissinger, it now turned out, had promised Israel that the U.S. would always supply in case of need — but if, as Israel announced, it had six-months supply reserve, and had made arrangements with Mexico, why should the U.S. supply?

Predictably, oil companies had now begun to cut supplies to gas stations. The New Jersey Gas Station Association President claimed it was another of those artificially created shortages to boost prices, but senior political leaders were going across the country warning of dangers even worse than the 1973 oil embargo. It was James Schlesinger, Energy Secretary, who said this and predicted that gas prices will soon be rising by at least 25% at retail level. Why a responsible senior official should be making these statements — especially when they differed so diametrically with what Carter was saying — was never explained. In also predicting grave dangers from the overthrow of the Shah's regime (and motivated clearly by different objectives), Senator Henry Jackson was also voicing gloomy predictions, and got, of course, ample media opportunities to do so. On *Meet the Press* (February 11), he said (about the new Government in Iran), "We will have a very hard time. To start with, gas stations would have to be closed on Sundays. Khomeini Government will give no oil to the U.S. and to the Western allies, even at best it will give very limited amounts". He then quoted Schlesinger's comments, that the economic damage would be worse than the 1973 oil embargo. "The President should tell it like it is, that gasoline prices will go to a dollar." He also said the PLO was tied to the Khomeini regime and they could all sabotage the oil pipelines elsewhere. He wanted to have a pact made between Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia and Defense Secretary Brown was there to enforce such a pact.

CBS's Marvin Kalb, his voice husky with anger, had a major segment on Iran in the *Evening News* and in a *Special Report*, repeating how Israel's Secret Service (Mossad) had known of the growing dangers, had warned the CIA but the CIA had become too complacent about its total power in Iran, after it had restored the Shah to



the throne in 1953. The CIA — and its former Director Richard Helms — blamed the recent anti-CIA mood within the U.S., the Senate hearings, the budget controls, and so on, for having weakened the CIA. In this the CIA had ample political support. Kissinger said so too, and blamed Carter for the consequences of his misplaced morality. Ford returned from his conference with the Shah, in Egypt, to condemn Carter for having allowed our friends to be abandoned and for losing Iran. Nixon on Nov 18 came out of his "retirement" to popular and thunderous ovations in Biloxi, Mississippi, to shout condemnation at Carter for not taking proper actions and not intervening on behalf of the Shah to quell the rebellion. Reagan, Goldwater, Bush, Connelly, Jackson, Javits, Moynihan, many past, present and future presidential hopefuls joined media to condemn Carter for his weakness, in making the most powerful country in the world into a weakling, a bumbling Colossus. It was because the U.S. was afraid of using its military might that such things happened, said the presidential hopefuls.

"GOP Presidential aspirants tour nation to denounce Carter's foreign policy" reported *The New York Times* Feb 20. Reagan, Connolly, Bush, Baker, Dole, Crane were on a stampede to denounce Carter's "weak and vacillating policy". Reagan charged "I am beginning to wonder if the symbol of the United States pretty soon isn't going to be an ambassador with a flag under his arm climbing into the escape helicopter". Connolly criticized SALT II and said, "the treaty will do nothing but legitimize and condone the Soviet's overtaking the United States in strategic arms between now and 1985". He added "Moscow fermented much of the trouble in Iran to oust the Shah". Senator Baker said "There is a growing view that America is a patsy and we never retaliate". Senator Javits, Moynihan, Jackson and others of the Zionist lobby were orchestrating their own stampede denouncing Carter's foreign policy.

"Fearful that a successful move to topple the Shah would unsettle other monarchies in that area, Saudi Arabia's King Khalid called on Arab nations to give the Shah all possible support ... the Soviets have made contacts with radical [Iranian] Shi'ite mullahs" (*Time* Nov 20, '78). In an editorial, Jan 12, '79, the *New York Post* said, "Saudis greater concern ... has been the rapid Soviet construction of ... a pincer encircling them ... these anxieties have been furthered by the continuing instability in Iran, which they believe could be turned eventually against them ... what the Saudis fear is ... Khomeini's influence ... Saudis are ruled by an ultra orthodox Sunni sect and the feud between Sunni and Shia has gone on for centuries ... a realistic diplomacy would persuade the Saudis that peace between Israel and Egypt should be their goal".

On January 18, on CBS, Senator Jackson said everything we see now is on a pessimistic trend. "The problem is far more serious than the public realizes." On the same day, CBS, also had Senator Goldwater, who said, "Carter does not seem to have a foreign policy ... if this wishy washy policy continues we will be considered the weakest nation in the world ... He first supported the Shah, then let him down". On January 19, CBS' Bob McNamara talked of the "religious machine" in Iran ... "Over a half million people turned out to demonstrate for Khomeini ... there is hope that democratic process will prevail, but that does not seem likely". And Marvin Kalb came up with a "A State Department senior official says the [U.S.] Government wants a non-communist government in Iran. But the trends make that unlikely."

The Shah was accused by the Iranians of having "absconded" with over \$25,000,000,000 abroad. As the Bazargan government took control, they also announced that the Shah was required back to face charges for his crimes. Currently

Morocco had him. Carter had requested Kissinger, Chase Bank President David Rockefeller and Ford to tell the Shah not to come to the U.S. where, it was reported, he wanted to come eventually.

If one were an Op-Con strategist — or even a reasonably astute Op-Con politician — evaluating the current Iran situation, it would not be difficult to recognize its real dangers to Op-Con objectives. The real danger was in the normalization of relations between the new Iranian Republic and the U.S.. Iran was now a Muslim country, strongly opposed to Israel, no longer the great source of riches for Big Business and obviously determined to be fiercely independent. It would be the worst example to set for other Third World nations, especially if Iran would, with friendlier relations to the U.S. White collar crime was on a dramatic increase. Violent crime by women was been through in the past under the Shah and the Nixon-Dulles-Kissinger foreign policy ideas.

What was then obviously critical from this standpoint was to cause the fiery, impassioned Iranians to be provoked enough more, to do something very erratic, thereby tearing down the normalization process under Carter.

Would it be paranoid to suspect that the insistence of Kissinger, Nixon, Reagon, Ford et al, badgering Carter to relent and allow the Shah to come to the U.S. *was intended with just such an objective in mind?*

Historically, it has been a standard political ploy among European strategies. In 1956, for instance, when Nasser of Egypt had nationalized the Suez Canal and Britain (along with France and Israel) invaded Egypt, Lord Mountbatten, himself strongly *against* the invasion privately, had nevertheless written to Sir Antony Eden (Prime Minister) "We should apply economic sanctions and pressure in the ways best calculated to goad him into further highhanded actions, which would antagonize the world at large, and also British opinion".

Undoubtedly, the Shah was dying of cancer and the argument that he should have the best care was a compassionate concern. But the campaign to bring him to the U.S. had been drummed up by Kissinger, Ford and the rest much *before* this, to obtain "political asylum" for him. In fact, as the Mexicans would later argue with justifiable affront, medical facilities in Mexico were just as good, and if American specialists were what the Shah wanted, Mexico was close enough for them to come and go as often as they wished.

In the meanwhile, the Iranians had worked themselves into a new height of frenzy. They had sacrificed thousands of lives to the revolution. They had won what they felt was a miraculous victory over the military might of the Shah and the U.S. But they were also convinced that the U.S. would not let them alone. The events of 1953 were very much on their minds. American media's derision and contempt for them, their religious leader, their religion, and the battle cries for action by Carter's political opponents were being carefully monitored by them. The Kurds were rising; Iraq was issuing ominous threats. And periodically there were assassinations of their new leaders, usually by masked motorcycle marvels who, they felt, were too professional to be merely local hoodlums. The jailbreak had released many of the mobs of the Shah's military and SAVAK leaders. The new government set up ad hoc courts to pacify the people. Western media ridiculed the "kangaroo courts" and trials.

In one respect there could be no excuse, except ignorance for the mob fury of the Iranians. They marched and burnt the American flag when the TV cameras were on them. They shouted slogans against the Shah and the U.S. But they also shouted "Death To Carter" and television each evening managed to get the "Death To Carter"

chants and banners more than anything else. The Iranian leaders would also soon denounce Carter. They would hardly ever talk about Nixon or Dulles or Kissinger, during whose times the worst excesses had been practiced against the Iranian people.

Why Carter? Was it because they felt, simplistically, that he was in charge of all American activities, like the Shah had been in Iran? The American-educated Iranians had perhaps been too busy with revolutionary affairs in the U.S. to truly understand the intricacies of American politics. Or were they influenced by some artful new "friends" in media who may have advised them to do this? Did they themselves feel it was clever politics to do this, recognizing Carter's declining popularity?

It was never clear why. It was Jimmy Carter and Cyrus Vance who had opposed the very strong advocates for interference in the Iranian revolution. Carter was being denounced by Op-Con politicians and media for "letting the Shah down" and allowing the Iranian revolution to succeed.

It is possible that in the year ahead Carter would have done just what he did. On the other hand, had the Iranians concentrated their hate and sloganeering upon the Shah, Nixon, Ford, Kissinger and voiced some *appreciation* for Carter's forbearance, Carter may have had a stronger hand with American public opinion.

As it was, TV reporters sometimes smirked as their cameras picked up the "Death of Carter" chants and banners. And all of it certainly provided more ammunition to Carter's political opponents who saw it as an excellent example of their claim that the Big Stick is the right answer in the developing world, not Human Rights.

In some ways, the Iranians displayed remarkable efficiency. They did not of course go communist, as Nixon, Kissinger and the rest of U.S. foreign affairs geniuses had predicted. In fact they held elections, selected a government, even resumed oil production and exports very quickly. Contrary to the daily prediction by media experts, there was now even a glut of oil in the world markets. U.S. oil companies had so much stock that they hired tankers as additional storage facilities.

In one respect, the experts were right. They had said virtually every day for months that oil prices would shoot up over \$1 per gallon and there would be another wild, inflationary trend. That happened very fast. Gas prices went over \$1 and leaped to nearly \$2 and inflation zoomed in the U.S. and elsewhere. Gold, silver leaped up to 350%. Bigtime speculators made fresh killings.

After all, why should oil prices and inflation not leap when Walter Cronkite "the most trusted man in the U.S." had told the public daily to expect it? What businessmen would be stupid enough to let such an opportunity pass by?

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Carter took an unprecedented step during the 4th of July weekend in 1979. He cancelled all his appointments for the following week and withdrew to Camp David. Then he invited leaders from all walks of American life to come to Camp David for free-wheeling discussions in a series of meetings with him. He included elected officials and private citizens in his call.

He looked very old and tired at this stage. The Israeli-Egypt-U.S. treaty had finally been signed in March. It relieved him of some of the more ferocious attacks at



home and his public image was slightly better; then his popularity had plummeted to the teens in some polls (lowest for any President) after the Iranian revolution.

The many reform measures Carter had sent to Congress in a burst of enthusiasm and optimism during the first six months of his presidency were either still frozen in Congress or tattered beyond recognition. Medical costs controls were failing.\* The Tax Reform proposals had been frozen, then the "across-the board" tax cuts campaign of the Republican after the anti-property tax blitz had led Congress to act on taxes in the opposite direction, with what was now jocularly called "The Millionaires Tax Relief Act". He could not veto it — there was not enough backing in Congress. In the meanwhile the hysterical forecasts of media, his own Energy Secretary Schlesinger and Senator Jackson, all forecasting oil shortages and steep gas price hikes, automobile gas prices were already over \$1 per gallon.

Inflation was once again out of hand. Carter had worked out a budget for 1980, which he had presented to Congress in January in which he had brought the deficit down below \$30 billion. This was the smallest deficit percentage in several years. It was aimed to reduce prime rate and stimulate the economy. Instead, now, the wild inflationary cycle would crush all those efforts.\*\*

There was great discontent in urban areas. Property tax cuts were leading to severe cuts in city services and, concurrently, crime was on the increase. Media usually claimed that crime was a recent phenomenon, unlike "the good old days". There was an unspoken racial slant involved, suggesting that blacks and Hispanics were the cause of this increase. This was entirely false — urban crime had always been high in the U.S. due to the causes we have looked at earlier, violent crime had always been an average of ten times higher per capita in the U.S. than in Europe. Even now, with far greater crime levels in Northern Europe than ever before, Detroit had five times the murder rate as Northern Ireland (with the same population), New York had 31 times as many armed robberies as London, Philadelphia had 44 times as many murders as Vienna, Chicago had more burglaries than all of Japan. In 1980, eight people were killed with hand guns in Britain, eighteen in Sweden, eight in Canada, four in Australia. That same year 11,522 people were killed with hand guns in the U.S. White collar crime was on a dramatic increase. Violent crime by women was reported to have grown 100% in recent years. Currently, in New York City alone, there were spurts of arson and bank robberies — 4,795 "suspicious fires" from Jan — June 1979, of which 3,872 were known to be from arson (for insurance gain). In one week in September, 1979, there were to be 635 bank robberies in New York City alone. All attempts to get gun control laws passed were being overturned in Congress,

\* Senator Edward Kennedy was the leader of the legislators who continued to fight for a National Medical Insurance Plan and for reforms in corrupt lobbying practices. At Lake Superior College October 29, '78, Kennedy said, "Representative Government on Capitol Hill [Congress] is in the worst shape I have seen it in the sixteen years in the Senate. The heart of the problem is that the Senate and the House are awash in a sea of special interests, campaign contributions and special interests lobbying". In just the first seven months of 1978 according to the Federal Elections records, a total of \$1,000,000 had been contributed to political candidates. A hospital cost containment Bill had been killed in a House committee through direct special interest contributions, according to Kennedy. "Nineteen of the 22 who voted to kill the measure had received a total of \$85,000 in campaign contributions from the American Medical Associations" he said.

\*\* Media had joked all the way through the State of the Union presentation. ABC-TV said Carter was "being less than honest" when he insisted that inflation could be controlled without recession. Op-Con politicians in the U.S. insisted of course that recession was the only way.

because of the Gun Lobby. In fact, the extremists among the Op-Con had initiated a practice of "organized self defense" which involved creating fortresses with arsenals and round-the-clock security guards in secluded parts of the U.S. Neo-Nazi groups took advantage of the "conservative" trends springing up. The rich were heavily into intensive security measures, computerized surveillance, security dogs, security guards and guns.

The city of San Francisco would soon pass a law requiring registration of hand guns. The Supreme Court would overturn that law as unconstitutional (State, not city, can have such an ordinance). A small Southern city very much pro-guns would soon pass a law in retaliation to make it compulsory for all citizens to *have* a gun and its mayor would become a national celebrity.

On the international weapons situation, Carter and Vance had succeeded, despite all the growing cold war sentiments generated by the hawks, in getting terms settled on the Salt II Agreement with the Soviets and the Salt II treaty was signed in June 1979. It now awaited Congressional approval. SIPRI reported that worldwide military expenditure was now over \$400,000,000,000 annually.

The U.N. said that after World War 2, there had been 133 Wars, by 1978, claiming about 25 million lives.

On recognition of China, Carter now had support from pro-Israel politicians as well. Some Congressmen and Jewish leaders visited China to try and establish friendlier China-Israel relations through trade (China was pro-Palestinian rights). China had lifted the "Bamboo Curtain" because it wanted Western technology and now, though many Op-Con extremists still denounced Carter's recognition of China and the ending of Taiwan's diplomatic representation, Big Business (starting with Coco Cola) was already on its way to sell consumer good to China's population of 1 billion\*.

But while the "Bamboo Curtain" was lifting, a "Tortilla Curtain" was descending on neighboring Mexico. There was a continuing surge of illegal immigrants from Mexico over the years, despite the terrible conditions and illegally low wages the immigrants were paid by the farm barons. The Mexican poor came for the harvests; many clandestine "recruiting" teams brought them too because of their cheap labor. Resentment on the U.S. side had grown to the point where a giant fence was now being contemplated to run across the long U.S.-Mexican border, as patrolling seemed ineffective.

Mexico, historically ridiculed by U.S. media, had considered this an affront. That would not have bothered the U.S. much, but now Oil came in again, as with the Arab countries, to provide Mexico with a weapon. Mexico had suddenly been found to be very rich in oil.

Carter's own Latin American policy had done much to improve relations with many Latin American countries. The early Rosslyn Carter visit, his refusal to support Somoza against Nicaraguan people, the Panama Canal treaty, his Human Rights campaign and his refusal to sell or give arms to the violating dictatorships (sharply altering the Nixon-Ford policies) had caused significant change in the attitude of

\* In a *New York Times*/CBS "Poll", the question asked of the public was worded as follows "Do you think Jimmy Carter should have pushed for closer ties with Communist China even though that meant breaking relations with Chinese Nationals in Taiwan?". So obviously biased was the structure of this question that even *Time Magazine's* Tom Griffith criticized it (Feb 2, '79). In the profession, such studies are usually called "Garbage in, garbage out".

many Latin Americans towards the U.S. The first foreign leader invited to the White House after Carter took office had been President Portillo of Mexico. Even Castro had spoken of wanting better relations with the U.S.

But now, on Carter's visit, Mexico was irked not only by the past ridicule, the American conquest of what was now the U.S. West and Southwest (never too far from Mexico's thoughts) but by a cavalier attitude of Energy Secretary Schlesinger in terminating an oil agreement that had been finalized, presumably because the oil companies were not happy with the terms.

Then came the Iranian revolution, the stoppage of oil supplies to Israel, and the U.S. was keen on this supply for Israel from Mexico.

At the State dinner for Carter, Protillo made acid reference to this: "Mexico has suddenly found itself the center of American [U.S.] attention, a surprising mixture of interest, disdain and fear, much like the recurring vague fears you yourself inspire in some areas of our national consciousness".

This only added one more foreign relations problem on Carter's overflowing plate. There were the most critical problems of relations with Israeli leaders, the Iranian revolution, Afghanistan, the Salt II Treaty — all under fire by political opponents and media. And at home there was the inflation, the unemployment, all the many reform proposals either frozen in Congress or killed. Above all, perhaps, was the climate of abuse and criticism directed towards the President. Carter clearly felt he needed to reach the people not just through his aides but also through community leaders.

In those many sessions during the July 4th period that Carter arranged with elected officials and leading citizens, Carter was said to have reviewed many of these issues facing the nation. He then again withdrew to review the issues on his own. Media said it had reports that he prayed a lot.

No doubt he recognized he was fighting a losing battle politically. The "Dump Carter" and "ABC" (Anyone But Carter) campaign was fiercely active among Republicans and Democrats. Powerful TV entrepreneurs, like Norman Lear, were working hard among New York and Hollywood entertainment circles for Carter's ouster in 1980. Jokes and ridicule of Carter were an epidemic on TV programs and in print.

New and forceful attacks on Carter's integrity and those close to him had now grown to explicit fury. While Carter was in Mexico, his brother Billy Carter had become involved in a mammoth row; Billy Carter, an outspoken individual, had become much in demand on TV, especially on TV celebrity game shows for some time, because he often made cracks against the President, usually as jokes. The Carters were apparently a closely knit family but each fiercely independent and Jimmy Carter usually laughed off brother Billy's quips against him.

But now Billy Carter made a public comment about the Zionist control of American media. There were angry reactions. Asked about these reactions, he replied "As far as I am concerned, they can kiss my arse".

The fury directed at Billy Carter now became so intense that he was eventually to land up in a nursing home for alcoholism and with a nervous breakdown. Charges included his business dealings with the Libyan Government, accusations of shady dealings in the Carter family business. Much later, after he had come out of the hospital, interviewed on the Stanley Siegal Show, he asked how he could be considered anti-Semitic when he had an aunt who was Jewish. This information came as a complete surprise to Siegal.



In the meanwhile, Jimmy Carter on his return from Mexico was asked repeatedly to condemn his brother's comments. Jimmy Carter refused to do this because he said his brother, like any citizen, had his rights, was always very independent and it was simply an issue in which he felt he had no right to interfere.

Jimmy Carter now faced more accusations — this time that he had been involved in business irregularities before becoming President, that he had known of Billy Carter's Libyan connections, that Billy should be registered as a foreign agent.

In the meanwhile, Rosslyn Carter's photograph with two men who had been present at a Democratic fund raising reception some years ago was being splashed all over TV screens and in print media. The two men were in group photographs with Rossalyn Carter but clipped photographs were often used for media reproduction. One was Jim Jones, whose Christian Temple cult had later committed mass suicide. The other was a businessman John Wayne Gary who turned out to be a homosexual murderer later. Gary's Chicago suburban neighbors were entirely surprised at Gary's secret practices. How Rosslyn Carter was supposed to have sinned by being at receptions where these men were present, as prominent citizens, was never mentioned. It was intended to be purely guilt by association at a public function.

Carter's chief aide, Hamilton Jordan (whom the Carters were said to look up as a son) was another target now. He was initially accused of having been involved with the absconding "wanted" billionaire Vescoe (who, it may be remembered, had made illegal contributions to the Nixon campaign). Columnist Jack Anderson then admitted that the document on which the charge against Jordan was made was in fact a forgery.

Then a charge of heroin-sniffing was brought against Jordan. The owners of the celebrated discotheque "Studio 52" were currently under charges of drug-peddling and they, along with black singer Lou Rawl's wife, were willing to testify that Jordan had asked for cocaine on a visit to "Studio 52", and at a Hollywood party. Intense publicity was being given to these charges during that July 4th weekend. Eventually the Carter administration would agree to the Republican leaders' call for Special Prosecutor Arthur Christie to be appointed to investigate the charges. Nothing came of it all, except for more personal agony for Carter.

Charges were brewing against another long-time friend and associate Andrew Young appointed U.N. Ambassador by Carter.

Young had set an entirely new course for the U.S. at the United Nations, in many ways diametrically opposed to what Moynihan had done. Young spoke well, often, of the developing countries and the new African nations, denounced South Africa for its apartheid policies. All of this made him very popular with Third World diplomats but had drawn criticism from some TV and print commentators and strong denunciation from the Op Con leadership.\*

The latest onslaught against Young had begun when he had spoken favorably about Khomeini and the new Iranian leadership. Shortly he would be forced to resign. In August, Andrew Young was reported to have met with the PLO Representative to the U.N. at the residence of the Kuwaiti ambassador. Young denied the charge when it was made, but taped recordings of his conversation with the PLO

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\* South Africa had, during the Nixon-Ford years, embarked on a multi-million PR campaign in the U.S., drawn substantial U.S. business involvement into South Africa; had support from Reagan and Goldwater.

representative would be produced by the Israelis. Apparently the latter had not only maintained a surveillance on Young, but were even able to bug the Kuwaiti ambassador's residence.

There were some questions raised about the Israeli's bugging the U.S. Ambassador and the residence of foreign ambassadors inside the U.S. but all that blew over and Young would leave.\*

When Carter returned from Camp David, he appeared to have come with a determination to fight back. Carter could be very firm and strong when he chose, and he was firm and strong as he proceeded to fire (ask for resignation of) most of his Cabinet and many of his aides. Carter had clearly decided that if he was to fight back, he had to have a team around him that he could rely on. He refused, however, to fire Jordan, as some of media were saying he should because of the cocaine charges against him. As in the case of Lance, Carter said he would welcome an investigation against Jordan and allow Jordan to clear himself.

It was soon apparent that while at Camp David, Carter decided that he had to be more pragmatic, politically, than he had been, perhaps compromise some principles. It may have been a decision carefully arrived at, or out of bitterness at the beating he had taken because of his moral integrity. Media, however, was not worried. Media could be frightened by Nixon and Agnew because they could play dirty. They knew Carter would not, so they were safe. Carter's pragmatism from here on may have been his own decision, or under advice from others, with the 1980 elections so near and his own popularity the lowest for any President. At that he made a valiant effort — in some ways.

But overall, he lost more than he gained. Because what he would lose now was that group of voters who had still held onto him because of his principles. And media made full use of pointing to his occasional pragmatism to undermine his credibility even more.

It is impossible to know what would have transpired if Carter, returning from Camp David after that extended July 4th weekend, had elected not only to remove the untrustworthy from his team but plunged head-on into a public confrontation with media. Perhaps he thought he could not win, perhaps he was afraid that media's power was just too much to take on, especially with the 1980 elections ahead. But in this he should have recognized that it was his critical duty to America to take on media — not merely for his own 1980 candidacy but because he owed it to future candidates of real integrity. His own failure would become an awful precedent.

He did try through town meetings to reach the people directly. He did succeed in stopping Ted Kennedy's challenge for the Democratic nomination, though by no means with the best methods.

But he also, tragically, moved away from the National Medical Plan, which Kennedy continued to champion. He gave in to the hawks in other ways. He did not give in entirely on his principles but he gave in enough for media to highlight and to raise doubts about his credibility and his new "ruthlessness". That July 4th weekend, he was said to have prayed to God a great deal. But when he returned, he appeared to be praying at times to the voters to forgive him his morality.

\* "Intelligence Operations Accepted Practice at U.N." said a front page article headline in *New York Times* (September 3, '79). The article said that everybody bugs everyone else at the U.N., so the Israeli bugging was nothing special.

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The CIA and the Military were back in vague respect by now. Even Nixon was respected again as a great expert on foreign policy.\* The 1975/76 Senate Hearings, had ended with much of their findings on CIA operations "classified", yet revealed too much for reverence to be back in style as yet. Aside from other CIA operations — such as the assassination plots (and presumably some successes) against heads of foreign states, among others, there was the series of disclosures about the Mind Control operations over the past thirty years in which the CIA indulged, and for which unsuspecting guinea pigs were Americans and some Canadians. In a special on ABC, January 1979 (telecast late, at 11.30 p.m.) some additional important facts were reported. Donovan, the head of OSS (from which the CIA was created) started Mind Control experiments in the 1940s. Lowell, a kind of alter ego of Donovan whom the latter called his Dr. Moriarty, then took it from there into the CIA. "Throw out all the ethics that you have learnt. Anything goes now" he reportedly instructed his recruits. George White, during the Eisenhower-Nixon regime, was reported to have ordered that the critical objective was "controlling an individual to do our will even if *this involves doing things against his nation*". It was as part of this operation that LSD was administered to unsuspecting human guinea pigs, among them military personnel, hospital patients, prostitutes and through them segments of the public. A Dr. Gottlieb was in overall charge throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. George White set up motel apartments for the administration of LSD on "fringes of society". Some unsuspecting victims (even a Dr. Morrow) reportedly developed mental disorders. Some doctors in nursing homes in the U.S. and Canada co-operated. At Allan Memorial Institute in Montreal, Mrs. Orlikow, a Canadian official's wife, was an unwitting victim. Over the years thereafter, she developed serious problems, loss of many mental faculties. She was to learn about the LSD experiments only recently, over two decades later. "Maybe I could have had a different kind of life" she told the ABC reporter, and sobbed, "I know the CIA is very powerful and important. But I don't know what kind of people would do this on innocent people". Among those that ABC interviewed was Dr. Milton Klien, a Mind Control adviser to the CIA, and prominent New York psychologist. "You are asking if under hypnosis a man can be made to do what he does not want to. The answer is 'yes'". "Murder?" asked the ABC reporter. "In war it is not murder" said Dr. Klien. Apparently the CIA, their Russian and Chinese counterparts were all convinced that the adversaries were using such techniques and aimed to keep up with — or ahead — of them.

The anti-war sentiments, so strong just a few years ago, had now almost faded, except among a minority. Even the Cold War was now almost back in style. The Op-Con hawks had done a remarkable job. Salt II had become harder to finalize with any meaningful and concrete controls of the nuclear buildup on both sides. Finally the terms had been worked out and in June 1979, Salt II was signed. Its provisions were superficial though it set ceiling on warheads and the Russians would lose a few ICBMs but mainly it placed regulations on both sides about future nuclear buildups. The only real advantage was that *psychologically* it kept the thought of Detente alive, the Cold

\* As part of the attempt to undo the adverse effect of Watergate on Op-Cons, Nixon decided on a European trip. One British M.P. asked that he be denied entry as an "undesirable" but he was not. In Paris, a Freudian slip he made was significant. Answering reporters about his Watergate tapes, Nixon said "They only seem like lies if you put them in the right context".



War thawed, and hopes of real, meaningful reduction in nuclear buildups for a future Salt III. But before becoming effective, Salt II had to be approved by the U.S. Senate and the opponents were fiercely active in trying to sabotage it. Republican presidential hopefuls said it was a "giveaway"; some pro-military Congressmen and military experts and media commentators voiced fervent and strong beliefs that Russia was ahead of the U.S. in military power. Ronald Reagan claimed both. Proponents of Salt II argued that this was not so; some said *even* if this were so, it was madness to keep trying to outdo the Russians because each of the Superpowers already had enough stockpiles to destroy the world many times over; any additional advantage sought by one, then countered by the other, made the possibility of a nuclear holocaust only that much more likely, aside from using up enormous amounts of money, critically needed in more humane areas. Labor leaders were convinced by the hawks and voiced themselves against Salt, for a different reason: George Meany President of AFL-CIO in February 1979 had threatened to go to court to stop it, because Salt II *would reduce jobs in the armaments industry*\*. Many millions of Americans, especially those working directly or indirectly in the armaments industry felt the same. Such views had an additional aura of respectability in the era of "looking after Number 1".

Certainly an increasing segment of Americans had been employed in the arms industry since World War 2, and arms sales abroad had obtained a good deal of export business, making the trade balance look less disreputable since Nixon had begun his unrestricted arms sales campaign at the start of the 1970s. Curiously, however, many of the hawks who warned about job losses if military activities and production were curtailed, were the same ones who had only a few years ago argued strongly about the need to mechanize, computerize and argued that jobs lost could easily be found in new areas.

In the meanwhile, though Carter had altered the policy of no-holds-barred arms sales abroad, the arms export sales volume was by now strong enough to keep its momentum going. For instance, commencing Feb 18, 1979, there was a "Defense Technology 1979" exhibition, which critics called an "arms bazaar".

There were over 60 exhibitors of arms and ammunition items for foreign buyers who were invited from around the world. The exhibition was at Hyatt International Hotel, Chicago, and along with it, there was a "Conference on Strategic Directions". That conference brought together intelligence officials, military strategists, business experts and those from the academic world, from Britain and the U.S.. The conference was officially intended, said its chief sponsor, a British editor, to "offer strategy experts the opportunity to discuss the latest global and military developments" (*Time*, February 12, '79).

The personal respect that Fidel Castro of Cuba had voiced for President Carter had now ended with deteriorating relations. At the World Non-Aligned Conference in Havana commencing September 1, Castro had severely criticized American "immorality" — among other recent events, he said that despite official confirmation in the U.S. that eight attempts had been made on his (Castro's) life before 1975, there had been not one word of apology issued by the U.S. Government.

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\* In fact, it has been shown that if every billion dollars spent on the military were spent in the civilian sector, it would generate 10,000 more jobs in industry and 21,000 *more* jobs in service-related operations.

Castro's comments were followed almost immediately (within hours) in the U.S. with the news that between 2,000-3,000 Russian troops were in Cuba and that they posed a threat to the U.S.. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings into Salt II were in progress when its Senator Church and Senator Javits made the news public, and quickly opponents were furiously calling for the rejection of Salt II for this reason. Senators running for re-election next year were quick not to side with Salt II as the anti-Salt II forces seemed to build up. General Keagan, Head of Airforce Intelligence, admitted that the presence of the Russian troops in Cuba was *not* new but had been known for several years, between six-seven years, at the least.\* Carter asked for "calm and a sense of proportion. This is a time for firm diplomacy, not panic and not exaggeration. The Russian brigade had apparently been there for some years and does not have weapons capable of attacking the United States". But he called upon the Russians (and said he would follow up strongly through diplomatic channels) to "respect our sensibilities and our concerns otherwise relations between our two countries will inevitably be adversely affected". He later also called upon Congress to act responsibly and not allow passions and exaggerated concerns to flow into the Salt II agreement, which was essentially a wholly different issue, and of paramount importance also to the U.S. interests as a treaty; it was not, he said, some kind of gift or present for the Russians that could be held back as punishment. The Russians said these troops had been in Cuba since the 1960s as a training force and had every right to be there. Moscow said that the U.S. maintains a military force of 2,300 in Guantanamo Bay, an enclave of Cuba and that the U.S. has its military also on Russian borders in Turkey. Russian newspapers Pravda quoted the editorial from London's *Daily Telegraph* to claim, that since the Russian troops in Cuba has been known to Americans for years now, it seemed that this sudden controversy was intended for other purposes, including the need to counter the Non-Aligned Conference (at which Castro had criticized the U.S.).

U.S. media, however, was heavily provocative on the issue. TV and print talked of the Carter policy of appeasement, of the lack of firmness in dealing with the Russians, that he had "skirted confrontation" in Iran, in Afganistan, in the Horn of Africa, in Zaire. In contrast they spoke of the great restoration of American prestige after the "eye-ball to eye-ball" confrontation with Russia over the Cuban crisis in 1962 (when, they said, the U.S. was at least four times as powerful as the Russians); some even applauded and praised Ford's Mayaguez invasion, in fact a ludicrous show of force against the Koreans in 1975, treated by that same media at that time, in an anti-war era, as ludicrous. Presidential hopefuls like Senator Howard Baker also called it U.S. meekness, carrying an image of a "paper tiger"; George Bush denied that the presence of the Russians had been known to the U.S. during earlier years (he was CIA Chief for a year in 1975 under Ford); Kissinger claimed that he had not known; Reagan and Goldwater called for action, and Ford spoke in Atlanta (providing the speech to TV and radio twenty four hours in advance, so they kept repeating his denunciations every few hours even before he had made the speech). In his speech Ford said Carter was playing politics when he says that the Russians troops were in Cuba during Ford's

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\* Keagan has been wanting Proton Beam development which could be a new laser beam reducing attack time on enemies to 1/3 of a second. his testimony, that the Russians 2-3,000 troops had been known for years, is even more credible. Keagan has been wanting Proton Beam development which could be a new laser beam reducing attack time on enemies to 1/3 of a second.

presidency (it was the Air Force Intelligence who had said it to start with, in fact, not Carter) and he asked Carter to act and demand the removal of the Russian troops.\* A few days later, it was confirmed by U.S. and Russian admission — those Russian troops had been in Cuba for 17 years.

Now Carter commenced his compromise. He announced plans for 200 new mobile nuclear MX missiles. They would cost \$33,000,000,000 but, as all observers knew, before they were fully operational, the costs would, as always, be a lot more. Whether the timing of the announcement was coincidental, or intended to warn Russians (and appease critics at home) was not clear.

The Salt II treaty was never ratified in Congress. That Christmas, Russia invaded Afghanistan. It was a deplorable act, under the claim that the Afghan government had sought help because Western powers were inciting revolt. Among other expressions of denunciation, the U.S. would withdraw from participating in the 1980 Olympics to be held in Moscow.

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The clamor from the Op-Con politicians to allow the deposed Shah of Iran into the U.S. intensified in late summer of 1979. Carter continued adamant. There were clear signs that the new Iranian government still wished to normalize relations with the U.S.

While the Shah was in Egypt, former President Ford had rushed to Cairo to meet with him there. The Shah then went to visit the King of Morocco; then to the Bahamas; then the Mexican Government was persuaded to take him in. Now it was revealed that he was in the last stages of cancer and for humanitarian grounds he should be brought for treatment to the U.S.. The Op-Con politicians, and media leaders pressured Carter. In fact, there were other countries — including Mexico — where he could have been treated just as well, with American specialists if he wished. The issue, however, was being turned now into one of American Prestige and Humanity. Was the U.S. such a helpless giant that it had to be afraid of Iranian rebels and could not help an ailing, friendly head of State?

Carter finally agreed.

The frenzied revolutionaries in Iran were still entirely involved in dealing with the frequent covert activities (which they saw as CIA-Mossad), the assassination attempts, the insurrection of the Kurds (some Kurds as *Time* magazine had reported, had even taken up arms for the Shah earlier against the revolution) who now wanted their own state; the border skirmishes with Iraq; they had conducted a preliminary election through all that chaos, overwhelmingly voted for an Islamic Republic; and the interim Dr. Bazagan government held the reins while presidential hopefuls campaigned for the glory of leadership; the lesser ambitious sought favor in each camp; all claimed to be fervent Muslims. They did move very fast, however, with the Constitution and the election.

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\* Gerald Ford had unofficially launched his bid for regaining the Presidency on Feb 16, at a large Hollywood party. It was the same time that some of the prominent names in TV and movies, like Norman Lear, had formally launched a "Dump Carter" campaign. Ford continued to keep his launch "unofficial" waiting presumably for a suitable time. A former gag writer for Red Skelton, Bob Orben, was now hired by Ford.



Despite all its many preoccupations, Iran's eyes were on the U.S. The Iranians had not forgotten the CIA staged return of the Shah in 1953; the CIA was then only in its unskilled infancy, compared to what it was now. The Iranians were convinced the U.S. was plotting to bring the Shah back on the throne once again. Khomeini said the Shah and the billions he had stolen must be brought back to Iran but in order to stand trial. The people agreed. Even officially Iran's new government made requests to the various governments where he went. He is a fugitive from justice, they said, and we want him repatriated. The Iranian crowds watched with growing fury as the Shah moved westward from Egypt to Morocco to the Bahamas to Mexico. The Iranians officially asked that the Shah's assets in the U.S. be returned, as stolen property; they were told it would have to be legally processed through the courts.

Then the Shah was in the U.S. And the U.S. media made no bones about its feelings too — it had continued entirely contemptuous of the new Iranians "rebel" government, the mullahs, the make-shift courts of justice, the executions. Each day since the revolution, old and new criticism and contempt were levied upon the revolutionaries.

On November 4, 1979, the dam burst. Frenzied crowds stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. They took all the staff, including the American diplomatic corps, prisoners. They ransacked the Embassy, and later published — many times — photographs of documents as evidence that it was being still used as a "den of spies" against the revolution.

They released a few of the Embassy staff soon — those whom they saw as not involved in "the Great Satan's" designs upon Iran (all blacks were released but one). Khomeini had previously sent Yazdi (in Feb 1979) to get the Embassy cleared of the mobs and ensure the freedom of the Embassy staff; this time he did not. He sided with those who were holding the Americans, later identified as an organization of fervent Muslim students. Khomeini merely ordered them to ensure that no harm came to the Americans hostages, to release those they were sure were not spies, while negotiations were conducted with the American government for the return of the Shah and the "stolen billions".

And then it went on — passions, prestige, politics on both ends. Carter placed an Embargo on trade with Iran. Economic Affairs Minister, Bani Sadr, campaigning for President apparently decided he should get international TV exposure like other Iranians were getting, so he called a press conference to *announce* that Iran was going to withdraw its liquid assets from the U.S. Predictably, Carter froze the assets before they could be withdrawn.

The United Nations agreed to send a team of international diplomats to hearings in Teheran, where the Iranians wished to hold a trial of the Shah in absentia, to display their evidence of the "crimes of the Shah and the U.S.". That international exposure of the evidence appeared to be what would satisfy Iran, and the anticipated world opinion against the Shah and the CIA operations of the past, it was felt, would soothe Iran's feelings enough to release the 52 Americans.

But something happened; it has never been pinpointed as the cause, of course, because U.S. media was beating a drum of apparent patriotism so loud that perhaps no one related the disaster to media. After all, how could one blame such patriots as the reporters who were so concerned about the hostages?

What did happen was that once the U.N. delegation was announced, *The New York Times* reported that a deal had been made — that in return for the U.N. hearings, the hostages would be released.

Not to be outdone, Tom Fenton of CBS cornered Bedjaoui, the Algerian member of the U.N. delegation, at the airport, on his way to Iran. Fenton probed Bedjaoui, whose French was no doubt excellent but whose English was not. Clearly uncomfortable with the probes, Bedjaoui finally nodded or said "Yes" when Fenton asked if there was a "gentlemen's agreement" to release the hostages if the U.N. delegation went and heard all the evidence. It was Fenton's big scoop that evening and all American media immediately reported the "gentlemen's agreement".

Naturally NBC had to have its own scoop so John Cochrane cornered Leprette, the French delegate, at the airport when the hearings were in a recess, and Leprette had come briefly to Paris. Cochrane prodded Leprette about the final U.N. report. Would it be harsh on the U.S.? Leprette said he could not talk about it. Cochrane probed and finally Leprette said he did not think so. That was Cochrane's scoop.

The Iranian students holding the hostages, of course, heard all this talk of "deals" and the U.N. inquiry as being no more than a mock trial to appease them. Predictably, they now refused to part with the hostages to their own government, claiming that their officials were involved in deals with America and in mock trials. U.S. media thoroughly denounced the Iranians for "going back on their word".

Then came the abortive U.S. military effort of April 25, that somehow got into a sandstorm no meteorologist had predicted. It would also result in a loss to the U.S. of Cyrus Vance, an American of great stature and perhaps the most valuable Secretary of State that the U.S. has had, in many years. Vance resigned because he had been strongly against the adventure. The furious Iranians would not discuss issues for quite a while after that. Then came Jack Anderson's piece which *The Washington Post* itself announced it would not print — a most unusual occurrence. Anderson did say in another piece that an invasion of Iran was in the offing.

In the meanwhile the terms of the hostages' release were now announced formally by Iran — they still included the return of the Shah's billions (he had died), U.S. apology for past crimes, return of frozen assets.

There was more anger, more internal subversions and political dissensions in Iran; more anger, more Iranian students arrested, beaten up, in the U.S. Then, on September 17, President Saddam Hossein of Iraq announced he was abrogating the 1975 treaty with Iran because the terms were not fair.

On September 22, Iraq invaded Iran, bombing several Iranian cities, including Tehran's Mehrabad airport. Iran was convinced the sudden invasion after the abrogation of the treaty was America's idea. Kissinger predicted (wrongly again) that Iran would lose the war in ten days. Its military was in shambles, many experts had left. It had no spare parts for its planes nor enough ammunition, due to the Embargo.

But Iran did not collapse. Somehow it survived the invasion after initial defeats and loss of territory. And fought back. The Iranians were willing to die for their cause. That obviously made the difference. The U.S. continued to press for the hostages' release. The Iranians Majlis said the Iraqi War was now top priority, not the hostages. Behind the scenes, however, negotiations continued.

By late summer 1980, Carter was closing in on Ronald Reagan's lead in the many polls which were now traditional during election year. Bitterness divided the

Democrats; the Carter-Kennedy acrimony had done much to enhance even more the chances of Republican victory. So certain in fact were the Republicans of victory, that unlike the past, several candidates had competed for the Republican nomination. Though Ronald Reagan had been the front runner, even among the Republicans, there was doubt if he could actually survive and win through the many months of electioneering. Reagan was well known as being very weak on facts, and to blunder all too often unless he had the entire material written out for him. There was concern too about his age.

Reagan's very expensive specialists did a thorough job, however; it was critical to use all his acting ability and his impressive looks, his self-assurance, but carefully avoid a one-on-one debate at any time with any opponents. George Bush, Reagan's leading Republican opponent, tried hard but failed to get Reagan in such a debate.\*

There was a peculiar turn at the Republican Convention. Reagan was nominated but rumors spread about the need to have a Vice-President with a strong image. Walter Cronkite of CBS was reportedly even considered. Then the back room deals, the announcement of George Bush as Vice-President (presidential contenders often made such agreement) but then growing talk that former President Ford would be a Vice-President; not just a regular Vice-President, but sharing the presidency with Reagan! Ford told CBS' Cronkite it would be a "Co-Presidency".

Apparently they were all finally dissuaded from this "radical" attempt and late that night it was announced that Bush would be the Vice Presidential running mate for Reagan, after all, for the November elections.

In the meanwhile, John Anderson, who had campaigned as a Republican candidate, declared himself now an Independent candidate; soon, he received very good media coverage, too. The November elections would be a three-way race, said media.

For Carter this presented a major problem. Anderson (who, of course, had no chance of winning) was considered liberal, so he would eat far more into Carter support.

Carter was still trailing at the polls, but had made substantial gain. The Iran crisis had enabled him in many ways to display strength and forcefulness, yet remain controlled. As a President in a national crisis he received some obligatory voter support as well.

Despite the Op-Con trends in the nation, and despite the power of anti-Carter media, there were many Americans who feared Reagan's extremism. Also, most voters were still registered Democrats. There had, in the past, been times when voters had been drawn to their party affiliation at the last moment, whatever their expressed earlier views.

Carter wanted a televised debate just with Reagan. The Reagan camp refused. Media sided with the Anderson supporters and the Reagan camp; they all said Anderson should be included in a three-way debate.

Obviously, it was critical for Reaganites to avoid a one-on-one debate with Carter. The latter was far more intelligent, more knowledgeable, had a remarkable memory for details, was an able debater. Reagan could be trounced. In a three-way debate, there were far less dangers of being challenged.

\* A one-on-one was agreed upon once but Reagan walked in with the other five candidates! Bush's objections made him look sulky and unfair from the start.



Anderson himself was adamant. He campaigned on TV and in person to be included in the debates. Was Anderson a deliberate spoiler on behalf of Reagan? Or was he genuine about his politics, and, on a matter of principle, insistent on being included? At best, Anderson was expected to get no more than 5-10% of the votes, but he hurt Carter's chances a great deal.

The "three-way" debate advocates won and these debates were predictably not debates at all. Then, a week before elections, the Carter camp, still fighting hard for at least one debate between Carter and Reagan, managed to get that debate arranged, through public pressure.

Carter was still close behind Reagan at the polls but had slid down in recent weeks. Intense behind-the-scenes negotiations had been conducted with Iran for several months through Algeria. Carter often claimed that he did not have enough time for the presidential campaign because the hostages were his first priority. Whether this was true or not, he did spend very little time campaigning through much of 1980.

By the second week of October, Op-Con politicians and TV celebrities were talking about a "deal" that Carter had made with the Iranians at very generous terms in order to get the hostages released before the November elections and thereby win public support. So widely and frequently was this "news" generated, that it had the predictable results.

The negotiations had in fact reached near breakthrough but these news items made the Iranians cautious of being used; that caused more deliberations and delays. There was, it must be remembered, a great deal of bitterness in Iran against Carter for the April 25 invasion, the Iraqi war and the many hot exchanges over the months between him and Khomeini. The other intended objective of the rumors — to neutralize any favorable impact of the hostages' release for Carter — was served even though they were *not* released before the elections. It made the American voter more suspicious of Carter and his "so-called integrity".

When the Carter camp finally got the one-on-one debate with Reagan scheduled for ten days before the elections, they were certain that the Reagan advantage, the benefits of immense advertising and image making, would collapse. There were, aside from Reagan's tendency to blunder on facts (and all too often make up stories and figures), the basic inaccuracies of what he was promising America on the economy. He claimed he could give a three year 30% tax relief to the voters, yet reduce budget deficits to \$62 billion by 1984\*. Also he would raise defense spending considerably. He said it was all possible, by cutting out waste and fraud from some wasteful social programs and with a stimulated economy.

The Carter-Reagan debate became, in fact, a disaster for Carter. Reagan did not stumble on facts, he was confident, fluent, pressed Carter on his failings, joked at Carter's expense. An obviously astonished, and then frantic Carter tried to pin Reagan down on the economy but Reagan managed to slide around it to make Carter's unemployment levels look shocking. Even on foreign policy, Reagan seemed to have his facts on many issues at his fingertips.

It was a major triumph for Reagan and on November 4, Reagan won by a landslide. It was the first time that projections of victory were made in a presidential race as early as 10:30 p.m. even before voting booths in Western States had closed.

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\* Reagan would actually come up with \$260 billion deficit by 1983, the largest by far in history.

Along with Reagan's thumping victory, the Republicans gained many House and Senate seats — to become the majority in the Senate for the first time in twenty-four years. Many Op-Con politicians were elected and the national mood was apparent from the fact that Senator George McGovern, a strong liberal Senator for many years, the presidential nominee in 1972, now lost his seat even in the Senate.

Some analysts said it was not a vote for Reagan so much as a vote against Carter; others said it was also because Carter had been too "conservative" in his promises by still asking the nation not to be self-indulgent, not to expect too much but learn to live with realities of the time. Ironically Reagan had been anything but "conservative" in this sense; he told Americans throughout the campaign that they were the greatest and that Carter's "pessimism" was nonsense;\* America would go on to greater glories under him (Reagan). Reagan got his loudest applause when he praised the American people in a voice dripping with sincerity but the one sure source for prolonged even hysterical ovation was what he said so often (with slight changes in construction) "We don't care if they [foreign countries] like us or not, we are determined to be respected".

Reagan's victory was not as resounding as was generally made out. When all the numbers were in they showed the actual votes cast, only 51% favored Reagan and only 52.4% of the eligible voters had actually bothered to vote at all. But it was a mindboggling victory because it placed a man who had for most of his sixty nine years been involved in show biz, in the most powerful office in the world.

On inaugural day, Jan 20, 1981, a red-eyed Carter took his place at Reagan's swearing-in ceremonies. Unlike Carter, Reagan wanted a big splash so over \$11 million were spent on all the pomp and splendor (Carter's inaugural had cost approximately \$4 million).

Carter had worked round the clock for several days. The hostage crisis was finally over. A sudden problem from American bankers had then delayed the bullion shift to the Bank of England, thereby delaying the hostages arrival by at least one day.

They would arrive *twelve minutes* after Carter had left office, to add tremendous magic to President Ronald Reagan's inauguration festivities. A Hollywood script writer could not have written a more momentous scenario.

How had Reagan become so fluent with facts, so confidentially on the offensive in that one crucial Carter-Reagan debate? Two and a half years later, the story broke; some in media had apparently known of it but had chosen not to let it get public.

Prior to that one and only Carter-Reagan debate, a "mole" in Carter's White House had stolen Carter's notes and briefing file for the debate. Through a series of clandestine channels, which were said to include William Casey (later Reagan's CIA Director) it had been eventually handed to Dick Stockwell (later Reagan's Budget Director). Presumably Stockwell was considered the smartest one to prepare Reagan on all the issues and facts that Carter was going to raise at the debate. Reagan's image specialists and Stockwell then rehearsed Reagan over and over again, with Stockwell playing the role of Carter. Op-Con media celebrities were asked to come and also brief and instruct. Some (such as George Will) came and helped; William Safire (*New York*

\* "Some people in high positions of leadership tell us that the answer is to retreat, that the best is over" Reagan said more than once "For 200 years we've lived in the future, believing that tomorrow would be better than today and today will be better than yesterday. I still believe it" (loud, thunderous applause, each time).

*Times*) apparently did not come to brief but provided input. George Will would then praise Reagan's "thoroughbred performance" in that debate, in TV shows and in his column which appeared in 400 newspapers. It was later reported that Will quite often helped Reagan, even after he became President, in providing data and phrases for his speeches. Then he would praise Reagan's speeches in his column. It was the perfect set-up.

When the story about stealing Carter's briefing file became public, Reagan first denied it. Then he laughed and called it "Much Ado About Nothing". When the outcry grew, he asked the FBI to investigate.\* In a school examination a student who had stolen examination papers before appearing for it, would be expelled or at least demoted. Ronald Reagan, after nearly three years in the White House, was already in the hands of his political strategists planning a world in which he would be the nation's choice for another term in 1984, with a Cold War that could turn Hot, \$250 billion military budget for 1984, adventures into Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Lebanon, Indian Ocean, Grenada and Libya.

Congress approved that \$250 billion military budget on Nov. 18, 1983. Later, that same day, the CIA revealed that it had made a mistake for the last few years. The Soviet Union was not spending 4.5% of its GNP on Defence as had been claimed by the CIA from 1976-1981. It had been spending 2%.

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\* *Time* magazine (July 25, 1983) agreed in an essay that it was "Much Ado About Nothing". As usual, however, it is more interesting to pick out facts from within *Time* itself, buried deep in an article rather than *Time's* powerful advocacy journalism. In this same issue, it said that Baker (Reagan's Chief of Staff) insists that William Casey brought him the stolen briefing file, and Casey was "willing to risk recruiting former CIA and FBI agents to provide information for political purposes". *Time* also added "information passed on by CIA or FBI agents to Casey or Hugel (Casey's deputy) would not fall within the theft statutes". In other words, we had a situation in which the stolen Carter briefing book was used by Reagan to great advantage, so he now asks the FBI to investigate, (what?) and even if the FBI did indeed find that FBI or CIA agents were involved in the theft, and passed it on to CIA Chief Casey, it is no longer theft.



## *Lights, Camera, Action, Roll'em — It's Reagan!*

(i)

**R**onald Wilson Reagan (pronounced Reegan until he entered politics), 40th President of the United States, was born in Tampico, Illinois, 1911, the son of a shoe salesman who, in drunken sprees, is reported to have frequently beaten his children. "Dutch" (Ronald) was apparently bitten by the acting bug very early. On his own admission his main interests were acting and sports when in high school and especially so at a local college. He found, at the start, that Hollywood was beyond his reach, but he did get a job with an Iowa radio station called WOC (World of Chiropractic) after leaving school. It was an unusual job even in the business of Make Believe. He was to be a radio announcer of ball games, but he would not actually be watching any game. He would have to *pretend* to be viewing it and make up the action based upon the wire service reports. Apparently he was very convincing at this charade. It led to a job in Hollywood where the Warner Brothers were planning a movie *Love Is In The Air* in which a radio announcer's part needed filling. That led to more parts in the cheaper "B" Class movies.

Then came World War 2. Reagan did not go to the battle fronts but to Culver City (near Hollywood) to work for a movie production unit of the Army Air Corp. In his autobiography, Reagan would later claim that this job was so important that it ranked "up with the atom bomb project". In reality, the studio merely created propaganda films and mock-ups of cities like Tokyo which could be used in these films and by the military for exercises.

Reagan's poverty years in Illinois had led him to be, like his father, pro-Roosevelt and the New Deal. But in post-war America, Reagan, now reasonably affluent, would change his politics. In 1946 he had married famous actress Jane Wyman; the marriage provided him with status and considerable influence, leading to important positions with the Screen Actors' Guild, the actors' union. As President of the Screen Actors' Guild, Reagan gained local political prominence among right-wing extremists when Cold War hysteria was ushered in via Nixon's unAmerican Activities Committee and Joe McCarthy's witch-hunt of suspected communists in Hollywood. Reagan was now no longer a New Deal Democrat (Roosevelt of course was dead); like some of Hollywood's actors, Reagan spoke strongly for the witch-hunters against communists and "subversives" in the movie industry. As we have noted, many of Hollywood's most talented who happened also to be intellectuals or serious thinkers were blacklisted. Reagan's career, of course, was really ascending now. He got movie parts steadily, though still in the "B" movies. Reagan was very good at roles which called for portraying emotions that had appeal during the Cold War hysteria.

In the meanwhile, his marriage to Academy Award winner Jane Wyman had ended in divorce ("There was nothing in common between us" she would later say). Cold War hysteria, however, was to find Reagan his second wife in a bizarre way. Nancy Davis, (an aspiring starlet, the daughter of a chorus girl and a New Jersey auto salesman, whose father had reportedly abandoned her mother after Nancy's birth and the mother had later married a Dr. Davis) was herself a right-wing extremist. Ironically, however, because her name was similar to another starlet who was suspected of communist sympathy, Nancy Davis had come under a cloud in the McCarthy witch-hunt. She appealed to Reagan for help, he used his influence with the witch-hunters to clear her, fell in love and married her.

Nancy Reagan would now become the dominant influence on Reagan, the brain directing him more firmly towards the extreme right-wing, Op-Con values, and into political and business aspirations beyond his dreams. Reagan continued with movie and TV roles. In one movie he was with Bonzo, a monkey. In another he was a professor (Professor of Show Business); in *Knute Rochne*, steeped in sentiments of the time, he was George Gipp, a football player whose deathbed wish to his companions "Win one for the Gipper" was so typically corny that it became the butt of many jokes in the Sixties (in the Eighties, of course, it has won him many votes).

Along with the movies, Reagan became spokesman for General Electric, one of the largest defense contractors, in its weekly TV show, *GE Hour*. He promoted Op-Con values on behalf of GE on TV and in person for eight years. He was also host of another successful TV series *Death Valley Days* which continued well into the 1960's. Then came his big break in politics. The Reagans were by now really wealthy, deeply entrenched with Southern California's very rich and powerful right wing extremists. Investments through their wealthy friends made them richer. They were deeply opposed to Kennedy-Johnson liberal trends. Reagan had worked hard for Nixon in 1960, denouncing Kennedy wherever he could. Then in 1964, Senator Barry Goldwater garnered the Republican nomination to oppose Democratic incumbent Lyndon Johnson. Goldwater, however, frightened even many Republicans with his hawkishness; as we have seen earlier, he wanted strong military action in Indo-China and China. Johnson won the presidential election by the largest margin in U.S. history.

Among Goldwater's few enthusiastic supporters, however, was Ronald Reagan. He was even chosen to appear in Goldwater's TV commercials, forcefully delivering the copy written for him by the Goldwater ad men. That performance greatly impressed right-wing strategists. Research showed that he had impressed many voters favorably not only with his handsome outer husk, his carefully modulated voice (with which they were of course familiar through TV and movies) but with his apparent sincerity. The more daring among the strategists considered a wild possibility that was already circulating among the rank and file extremists: could Reagan himself be trained to run for high office?

The political fortunes of the right-wing extremists were at their lowest ebb at this time. No matter how hard they tried, no matter how much money they spent in research, in advertising, in hiring the best brains money could buy as strategists, after Kennedy's brief era, the right-wing politician usually came across as bigoted, fanatical, greedy, pedestrian. Reagan, with his cowboy image, his pleasing appearance and his lifetime in show business could be a great asset in changing that awful image. Could it actually be done? After all, George Murphy, the song-and-dance man, had only recently won himself a seat in the U.S. Senate, and Murphy (a close buddy of

Reagan) had done it too on right-wing politics from Southern California, relying mainly on his Silver Screen popularity.

The obvious tryout for the Reagan gamble was the governorship of California in 1966. In addition to having a powerful right-wing machinery, Murphy's new constituency would be a great asset; Reagan had close cronies who were very powerful locally, such as Tuttle (auto dealer), Wrather (entertainment and real estate), Cummings (supermarket chain), Dart (drug store chain); they were willing to throw themselves wholeheartedly behind such a candidacy; the frankly racist John Birch Society would back him fully; above all, most of Hollywood's glamorous celebrities — except a few — would be thrilled to work for him, as one of their own. The liberals and intellectuals in Hollywood would not, of course, but these were now very few.

Despite these advantages, it still seemed too ludicrous. Reagan himself was, unless thoroughly coached, apt to make serious blunders and his Democratic opponent was Governor Pat Brown, a senior politician, the incumbent, who had defeated no less a right-wing celebrity than Richard Nixon himself in 1962 for that very political office; Nixon had tried for that governorship after his defeat against Kennedy for the presidency in 1960. Could a lifetime actor now succeed where a lifetime politician thoroughly versed in local, national and international issues had failed?

Yes, he could. In what was then seen as the ultimate triumph of image-making over reality, Ronald Reagan defeated Pat Brown and became Governor of California in 1966. The Brown defeat in many ways was self engineered. His camp had simply not taken the Reagan candidacy too seriously. It seemed a big joke, typical Tinsel Town foolishness. The Reagan victory astounded even the bulk of the Republican party; Big Business leadership, while always pleased with Reagan's fervent support, had nevertheless worried that his candidacy would seem too frivolous to the voters, that the Republican right-wing would become crushed even more deeply into the mire as a result, especially with signs of an emerging Black revolt and early rumblings of youth radicalism.

The Reagan victory gave new heart not only to the right-wing politicians but to their image-making specialists. Miracles could come about in the TV era, with skilled research, marketing and advertising techniques. They rolled up their sleeves to work for the return of Richard Nixon in the 1968 presidential elections.

Reagan's victory had not been a miracle entirely engineered by his strategists and his enormous advertising budget. Something special had been provided by Reagan himself. His many years in the acting field had helped greatly, as had his appearance, but most of all it was Reagan's limited intelligence and limited knowledge, his *inability* to think deep thoughts, that had become his major asset on TV. Reagan had always been deeply respectful of the rich and the successful, and he apparently believed that the political views for the nation of the party of the very rich and successful had to be correct. He was in awe of their clever strategists. What they told him to say had to be correct, and Reagan believed in the morality of acting a role in real life. Other actors more capable of serious thought and highly talented, such as Sir Lawrence Olivier, could question the deep involvement of actors in their roles and its overflow into the real life of any actor. Reagan could not think such incisive thoughts of self appraisal. Reagan's world had to be simple, black and white with a minimum of grey. Reared on hundreds of Wild West scripts, Reagan's mind was not spacious enough to consider alternative viewpoints seriously; the viewpoint expressed by his friends and strategists had to be the right way. All others had to be wrong, to be ridiculed, shot from the hip



as any Wild West hero did his adversary. Actors love applause; his attitude not only won applause but obviously delighted his supporters; carefully used by his strategists, it won him more votes. Reagan's years in Sacramento were learning years under the strategists on how best to use this political weapon. Most of the actual administration of California he delegated to trusted assistants.

The beauty of the role that Reagan was now being called to play for the Op-Con leadership was that it was not necessary that he prove his qualifications for any high political office. He only had to have great confidence. The words and thoughts would be provided; the staff would conduct the business of the Office. He did not even need to know details on issues. The public did not require that.

In a different era, this might have been a dangerous shortcoming in a politician aspiring for high office. In our times, his strategists found his limited intelligence and knowledge, his inability to think deeply, his greatest assets. These characteristics enabled Reagan to speak with great apparent convictions and superb confidence on any issue, in difficult times when more experienced and serious minds could not see easy solutions to complex problems. The aura of complete confidence, in resolving complex social and economic problems or the arms race or foreign policy, would become especially effective in the disturbing times for the country preceeding the 1980 presidential elections. Carter, far more intelligent, knowledgeable and moral, was entirely incapable of projecting such single-minded confidence. Moreover, to Reagan, reared on hundreds of scripts with proven box-office success during the War years and then the witch-hunting McCarthy era, there was nothing embarrassing or shameful in appealing to baser emotions, implied bigotry, rabble-rousing flag-waving; this was to him the highest form of patriotism.

His public career has been frequently punctuated by a series of howlers when it comes to facts, despite all the training and protective insularity of his team. For this reason, they fought strongly against a face-to-face debate with Carter, the first time a challenger has refused to debate, then only yielded to one debate. He might have run into major problems in that, had not his people managed to steal Carter's briefing file prior to that debate and thereby know, then thoroughly rehearse, Reagan on the points Carter intended to raise at the debate.

There is no reason to doubt the oft-repeated belief that Reagan is a "decent guy" or even that he is religious in his own way, though he is the first President in living memory who does not attend church, even on Sundays. No doubt his conscience finds adequate rationales in the acceptance of policies his strategists propound, as being the best because they are the policies of the rich and the successful. No doubt the zealots of the pro-Big Business, heavy militarism, fiery anti-communism of the right-wing evangelists like the powerful Jerry Falwell, provide all the religious rationale his conscience needs. The apparent comradeship with the current Pope also no doubt provides adequate rationale (and active support from the Catholic Church as it did in 1984, in some ways). All of this also projects a moral image to a large segment of the voting public to policies which in more realistic times may have been considered grossly immoral.

Cushioned in the security of his limited environs, therefore, to Reagan, the end justifies the means. No doubt this explains why a "decent guy", now 40th President of the U.S., makes up stories, exaggerates incessantly, lies baldly in support of his viewpoint on any issue. In the material sense, his rich and successful friends provide the rationale. In his own version of spirituality, the chosen Protestant and Catholic evangelists do.

(ii)

In the euphoria of being re-elected — and, at that, by a resounding margin, Reagan is said by the grapevine to be beside himself with joy. Why not? He has played his role far better than even his ardent supporters expected. He has on-the-job experience. The rewards have been beyond his wildest dreams: world fame, world leadership, rubbing shoulders with the highest, even royalty as friends.

Media highlighted throughout the 1984 electioneering that youth, which once abhorred Reagan even more than it did Nixon, are now among his most enthusiastic supporters; and that the Republican Party, for decades with minority membership, is now closing in on the Democratic Party majority.

Those young people whom media has eulogised since the mid-1970s once called the "Preppies" (an American answer to the British upper class) are the core of the new "Yuppies", the young and successful, frankly self-centered, enthralled with Big Business and money, yearning for upper-class status through money and European alliances. The word "young" in this context is relative; many of the "Yuppies" who form the nucleus of Reagan's support are in their late thirties, even forties and of executive cadre in corporations or into their own businesses. They include many who, as teenagers, were, under peer group pressure, into new values; in the 1970s, they joined corporate life, ostensibly to "change the Establishment from within". Predictably, they were swallowed up. They are of the first TV generation and will no doubt sway with whatever is "in", right into their old age.

Many younger "Yuppies" and teenagers are also strong Reaganites and for Op-Con values. It would have been most surprising if they had *not* been — they have known nothing except media's dragnet of Op-Con values propaganda that has been so intense for the past decade.

In many ways, the victory of the Power Cartel is all the more complete and sweet because they can truthfully claim that many of that very generation they once feared the most in the late 1960s are now into Op-Con values. In much the same way that the new values youth movement once drew millions of youngsters through peer group pressure and media glamorizing, the Yuppies now draw millions into the Reagan camp.

Major media (whom Op-Con leadership, especially since Agnew have characterised as "liberal") now glorify the Yuppies, only this time with apparent relish. For instance, while endorsing Mondale editorially, "liberal" *Washington Post* was so carried away in its adulation for the Yuppies, that in one of its lengthy coverages about them shortly after Reagan's re-election, the *Post's* "Style" section plastered photographs of a select few young, Preppie-Yuppies on its front page, then re-printed the same photographs on an inside page where the Preppie-Yuppies' words of wisdom were continued: surely a first in New (New, New?) journalism\*.

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\* The Op-Con leadership, not satisfied with their tremendous gains, continue to attack major media as "liberal", no doubt with their standard belief that attack is the best form of defense, that these attacks keep media from catering too much (even in tokenism) to the "liberal" segments of the population. Currently Senator Jesse Helms, one of the fiery extremists has charged CBS-TV in particular with "liberal", no doubt with their standard belief that attack is the best form of defense, that these attacks Robinson published his findings after an intense study of 800 examples, Labor Day to Election Day 1984 for his Media Analysis Project at George Washington University. He found, overall, that CBS was a "touch more conservative than NBC and ABC and Dan Rather (Senator Jesse Helms' favorite target) in his own comments even more conservative than the rest of CBS" (Thomas Griffith, *Times*, April 29, 1985.)



Of course not all the young are for Reagan and Op-Con values, many no doubt still adhere to earlier principles, while some others are not Op-Con only because they are the Have-nots but who may, with affluence, still make the leap. And not all of media is enthralled with Ronald Reagan. Some Liberal commentators continue to criticize Reagan and the current trends; however, because he is so popular, even critics couch their arguments carefully, and punctuate them with at least some words of flattery for Reagan. In an age when media celebrities can easily make a million dollars a year, mental prostitution is rampant; chameleons abound; commentators who claimed to be liberals only a few years ago, now forcefully declare themselves Reaganites. The majority who had pretended to have liberal leanings have of course now come out and proudly proclaimed their Op-Con beliefs. To diehard Op-Cons, Reagan's closet advisers in media, like Hugh Sidey (*Time* magazine), George Will (syndicated columnist and ABC-TC commentator) and William Safire (*New York Times*), Reagan is now virtually The Anointed One. Deep within, they know how extremely difficult it should have been to make the people switch so completely in their values in such a short space of time; media has played a major role, of course, but Reagan has worked the miracle.

(iii)

Television, too, has played a very vital role in the miracle. Op-Con extremists continue to claim that major media, including TV, is "liberal", thereby attempting to make them even more rightist than ever. In fact, major media serves the Op-Con purpose far better, more skillfully, than the short-sighted Op-Con extremists would have it do. With its vast experience in image-making, media know that it would be foolish to make its bias too obvious and thereby lose credibility among the masses. It took great skill to win credibility in the late 60s and early 70s. Of course when things seem rough for Reagan, media quickly uses its mammoth power for Reagan even if the bias becomes obvious.

There are sometimes those news items that cannot be hidden for long. Media has reported in passing — usually with indulgent humor — that Reagan sleeps more than any President (some twelve hours a day), that he dozes off not only after long journeys (such as when visiting the Pope) but even at Cabinet meetings (his own aide once revealed this rather foolishly on live TV); that he voiced surprise when discovering (after becoming President) how close Cuba was to the U.S. coast; and (presumably on another occasion) at the proximity of Israel to some of the Arab States. Does he truly know the difference between movie scripts and the real world? Even *Time* magazine reported (February 8, 1984) that twice he has spoken in speeches with great passion (as an example of American heroism) about a World War 2 bomber pilot who chose to go down with the plane because his wounded gunner could not bail out; the anecdote he has recounted as fact is *fiction*, based on the 1944 movie *Wing and a Prayer*. *Time* also reports in that issue that in a meeting with a foreign leader last year, Reagan pulled out and read from the wrong 4" x 6" cue card (Reagan is apparently provided with these prompt cards in his jackets before meetings.) The diplomat was aghast. A Reagan official admitted to *Time* that Reagan lets the executive staff run itself. "His personal passivity is amazing" he said. His blunders on facts are now legion; not even his most ardent supporters in media have been able to cover the major howlers over the years. In one speech recently he referred to the Third World as "Third World



War" *eight* times in error — a highly significant, recurring slip. His aides now thoroughly screen all his public comments, and strictly disallow reporters' questions without previous briefing, especially after the famous incident when his wife Nancy had to prompt him (in an undertone) several times (his hearing problem no doubt required the repeated prompts) in response to what was a simple question by a TV reporter. His press conferences have been far fewer than Carter held and at these a careful sequence is rehearsed before, so that Reagan knows who he is calling upon to ask a question; aside from this and the prepared and carefully rehearsed speeches, Reagan's TV appearances consist mainly of Reagan and wife waving to the cameras (in manner rather like a cowboy riding off into the sunset) as they take off from the White House lawns to their helicopter; the latter's noise discourages any attempt at questions. Occasionally when Reagan has been briefed to answer a question, he may stop to give a one-liner to one question with great aplomb, then wave himself away. Reagan is admitted to be taking more vacations than any President in history. And while Nancy Reagan's extreme extravagance during the first few years in the White House did get reported, media quickly helped her get over that image with extensive coverage when she suddenly switched to serious concerns for drug addicts, and to programs for their rehabilitation.

Not since Warren Harding, it is said, has there been a President who has so much difficulty in absorbing facts and understanding complex issues. It has also been reported that briefings on all issues, no matter how complex, have to be reduced to no more than one page for the President. No doubt, his strategists see this too as a great advantage. This way, Reagan needs only to know the bare outline of any policy decision. He can be fed that, then it can all be clothed by his writers in anecdotes, homespun rhetoric, fabricated statistics to suit the argument, and there you have it — another victory. The public likes the man, it too does not want to think deeply. It wants to be entertained, flattered. No politician today can compete with Reagan at that.

In the more important, difficult times for his popularity, major media — TV in particular — has done yeoman service to Reagan. To start with, it was not easy, despite the skills of his expert strategists, to create the image of Reagan as a leader who thinks for himself, "the living legend" who evolves policies and strategies from his own great mind. But media achieved that. Two years into his first term, there were revelations of corruption, indictments of Reagan appointees, when there was the highest unemployment since the Great Depression and the economy was stagnating (though the giant conglomerates were making more profits than ever), media helped Reagan's image through cautious optimism, seeking out and broadcasting every favorable trend, even appeals to the public to have more confidence (buy more), a far cry from the daily gloom and forecasts of economic disaster during the Carter years, when the economy had in fact been doing better.

With mergers between giants, now an epidemic under Reagan as though monopoly laws were non-existent, the economic power of the nation has now shrunk into the control of even fewer hands than ever before. Predictably, the economy suddenly showed strength, the stock market boomed, as the 1984 elections drew near and media siezed upon the "economic revival" with applause; there were daily forecasts of a great recovery, a remarkable come-back (almost as if it was a ball game); commentators and economic experts talked about great times ahead. Reagan, the miracle-worker, had been right. The Gipper had won one for the Gipper.

No one asked a simple question: how much of this recovery was due to the

defense contractors, bloated with profits, after devouring the annual \$260,000,000,000 military expenditure (soon to be more than \$300 billion), now passing on some of that astronomical amount to allied industries, trades and some employment?

It is possible that Gary Hart may have proved a more charismatic opponent. But Mondale proved, especially in the first of two debates which the Reagan team was willing to allow, that when it came to facts, issues and policy, he was an impressive debater and could trounce Reagan. And he did. The public saw Reagan falter, stammer, frightened, confused, often blank. The Democrats had been greatly charged up with euphoria even prior to this. Geraldine Ferraro had been nominated and chosen first woman vice-presidential nominee of any major party in U.S. history. Women, especially those angry with Reagan's sexist views, loved that. Ferraro revealed great charisma, in addition to high intelligence and wit, seemed likely to be of great danger to Reagan. Jesse Jackson's considerable talents and even greater moral strength had boosted not only the blacks but other ethnics and Have-nots as well. New York Governor Mario Cuomo had delivered a keynote speech at the Democratic convention that many considered epoch-making. Women, minorities, much of Labor and the young who were not Yuppies were collectively showing such an enthusiastic spirit for the Mondale-Ferraro ticket that it appeared as if the Democrats could work a miracle of their own, despite the awesome strength of the Power Cartel.

Major media tore that down very quickly. To start with, Mondale's power base had been Labor. The union leaders and much of their membership, ever since Agnew's "Silent Majority" campaign, would no doubt have preferred to be with Reagan, (the notorious but powerful Teamsters Union stayed with Reagan all the way), but the unemployment levels were such that they saw their interests best served with Mondale. Media had quickly labelled Mondale's labor constituency "Special Interests". It was a clever choice of terms, negating Reagan's massive bias towards the rich and powerful, Big Business and the military. Almost daily TV had referred to Mondale's "Special Interest" ties, all through the campaign year.\*

In other ways, the Democrats played right into media's hands. Jackson's credibility and moral force was quickly arrested by *The Washington Post*, through a series of provocative pieces and editorials, demanding that he reject the support and friendship of Black Muslim extremist Farakhan, and that Jackson admit that he had called Jews "hymies" in a (reportedly) confidential conversation with the *Post's* black reporter Coleman, thereby displaying his anti-Semitism. Needless to add, all of media, especially TV, gave this top billing, for many days, along with demands on Mondale to denounce Jackson.

Then the Democrats blundered in not carefully checking the financial records of Ferraro's husband John Zaccaro. And that was fatal. Democratic front-runners had been crushed through media in the recent past; in 1972, for instance, when opposing Nixon, Senator Muskie had been destroyed for crying in emotional anger against lies printed against his wife, and then Senator McGovern because his running mate had once been treated for deep emotional problems.

Quite unnecessarily, Ferraro announced one day that her husband's finances and tax returns would be made public; her husband then retracted that, finally did make

\* *Time* magazine (one assumes innocently) chose then to use the phrase in its polls during the year. It asked voters which of the two (Mondale or Reagan) would be more likely to be influenced by "Special Interests". Dutifully the public, by a vast majority, said Mondale!



them public. There was no regulation that required such disclosure from the spouse, and no doubt she had assumed everything was letter-perfect in her husband's business (in some of which she was a silent partner or share-holder). It was extremely naive to believe that in New York's fiercely competitive real estate world, every rule and regulation had been thoroughly honored by her husband, but she evidently did.

Media of course jumped on that, subjecting Zaccaro's finances to microscopic examination, with daily innuendoes on TV and in print, for weeks. After that gruelling inquiry into every aspect of Zaccaro's businesses and finances, Ferraro herself was subjected to what amounted to an inquisition by the press for two hours. Friend and foe admitted that the press conference had been the most brutal that anyone contending for high office had ever been subjected to, and all agreed that Ferraro had acquitted herself extremely well.

But the verdict was in, even before all that. To a public vague about details, media's daily innuendoes and veiled accusations had done the job. Geraldine Ferraro was not "Mrs. Clean", so all her accusations against Reagan for moral wrongdoing had to be ignored. Zaccaro, it is true, was guilty of cutting corners but in all the media blitz on the issue, there were some matters the public never considered because these matters were not the focus of media's interest.

When had media ever looked into the finances of presidential and vice presidential candidates, let alone their spouses, in such enormous detail? Was this excessive scrutiny because Ferraro was the first woman candidate for such high office? Or was there some irritation towards her because her proclaimed values were abhorrent to Big Business media? How much publicity did media give to the fact that, despite Zaccaro's alleged breach of the laws, he and Ferraro had paid far more taxes consistently (almost 40% of income) than they needed to pay, if they had resorted to the many tax loopholes available to the rich and which the rich always use? Could Reagan and Bush make a similar claim of waiving tax right-offs? Mondale claimed Bush paid less in taxes than his lowliest staff. In fact, when had media ever examined Reagan's tax returns and finances in such details even when he had visibly blanched in 1973, on TV, when asked by a reporter how much taxes he had paid in 1972?

As it was, the great emotional tidal wave that had built up for the Democrats was killed very effectively after the media blitz on Ferraro's husband's wheeling and dealing. As always, even a smudge on one's otherwise clean clothes through a spouse did not entitle one to call someone wallowing in dirt to be dirty, when media so decides.

Exactly how corrupt had the Reagan administration been? The Democrats claimed that there was evidence to show at least 100 senior and middle-level Reagan appointees had been involved in shady practices. Independent commentators have placed this at close to 75. Whatever the figure, few would argue (those that is, who may have bothered to look into facts) that the Reagan administration has been among the most corrupt in living memory.

Consider, for instance, just the top echelon of Reagan's team. "It is hard to remember when any President had so many friends in key positions" wrote columnist James Reston in *The New York Times*, January 8, 1984. There are those who have not been touched by any rumors of scandals, such as George Schultz (Secretary of State) and Casper Weinburger (Defense Secretary). Strangely, though, prior to taking office they were, respectively, Chief Executive and Chief Consul of the Bechtel Company, reputedly one of the largest companies in its business volume, with interests as far-reaching as defense contracts and civil engineering projects around the



world, but which remains a *private* company. But then there has been Donovan, Secretary of Labor who was frequently reported to have ties to organised crime figures, and who was finally indicted on a charge of fraud. Another Cabinet member, Agriculture Secretary John Block has had a difficult time explaining how his partner in some farmlands, John Curry (who subsequently went bankrupt) was able to obtain a large loan from a Federal agency under Block's jurisdiction, when Curry's finances were in such disorder while other farmers are denied any loans.

Paul Thayer, Deputy Secretary of Defense, who resigned 24 hours before the SEC officially charged him with having leaked secret information on financial deals which friends and relatives reportedly capitalized upon, was later convicted in the courts. Others in the Reagan administration have been accused of similar practices. Thomas Reed, Special Assistant to the President, was found guilty in March '83 of purchasing shares in Amax Inc. in 1981, just before its merger sent its shares skyrocketing. His father, it turned out, had been a Director of Amax; SEC settled the case without prosecution when he agreed to return the ill-gotten profit of \$427,000.

James Watt, Secretary of Interior, resigned after his blatant favoritism of Big Business purchase of federal properties, and his outspoken prejudices became too much of an embarrassment for Reagan. Ann Burford, appointed Director of the Environmental Protection Agency was accused of permitting pollution violations and of favoring Republican political candidates in enforcing or ignoring pollution laws. Her special assistant, was jailed for perjury following a congressional inquiry. Burford resigned claiming — like Halderman and Ehlichman did in Nixon's time — she personally was guilty, that Reagan knew nothing about the misuse of power.

Reagan's personal popularity with the public undoubtedly serves to frighten even those in media who are still into investigative reporting of government wrongdoing. In 1984, *Newsweek* magazine published a report in some detail about the alleged involvement with organized crime figures of Senator Lexalt, Senator from Nevada, a very close friend of Reagan and his campaign manager. *Newsweek* later claimed to have withstood intense White House pressure to publish the report. Then, despite its nervousness following the Westmorland libel suit, CBS' *60 minutes* had also delved into this involvement of Senator Lexalt. On the *Phil Donahue Show* in the Fall of 1984, Mike Wallace, *60 Minutes* top celebrity reporter, claimed that great care was being exercised after the Westmorland case, but the Lexalt matter had been thoroughly investigated, was being edited, promised that it would be aired before November (i.e. would not be deliberately delayed to favor Reagan). The report in fact was never aired.

News reports have occasionally surfaced about alleged questionable past practices of senior officials such as National Security Adviser Clark, Attorney-General Smith and CIA Director William Casey (Casey was also allegedly involved, in the stealing of Carter's briefing file, prior to the Carter-Reagan debate in 1980). Edwin Meese, Reagan's close crony for many years, Chief White House Counsel, ran into trouble for a while when Reagan nominated him to succeed Smith as Attorney-General. Because of Reagan's popularity with the public, Congress has usually merely rubber-stamped Reagan's nominations. But this time, not only liberal Democrats but many Republicans were aghast at the Meese nomination. There was too much in Meese's background that was questionable, it seems, for the position of Attorney-General. His past history, his expressed views were brought up in the congressional inquiry. It was reported he once referred to the American Civil Liberties Union and its lawyers as "a criminals' lobby". And he was reported to have placed

men in senior government positions in return for "loans" to himself or his wife. In 1984, while this inquiry was on, Reagan's friends advised him to withdraw the nomination before too much was aired. But Reagan was confident, reports said, and insisted that the nomination stay. A public prosecutor was then appointed by Reagan's Justice Dept. to inquire into alleged wrongdoings by Meese. He concluded however that none of the wrongdoings justified any indictments for criminal prosecution. And so, in the wake of Reagan's resounding re-election, a docile Congress approved Meese as Attorney-General. In an editorial critical of Meese's nomination ("Meese Doesn't Measure Up") *The New York Times* (Jan. 29, '85) listed some of Meese's shortcomings for the job, and referred to him as "opportunistic".

How does one learn about additional cases of corruption or suspected corruption? Following Watergate, some individuals in media rushed into investigative reporting. But now, except for occasional cases that hit the limelight, media is generally silent. Major media has both the power and the facilities to investigate. As Big Business enterprises, to do much of it against the Reagan administration might be a case of cutting one's nose to spite one's face. The enormity of repeal or relaxation of laws under Reagan — laws that attempted in the past to control Big Business — has been mindboggling.

As always, periodically there is a burst of publicity regarding corruption in Defense spendings. Now we have had the disclosures (not for the first time) of extraordinary luxuries for military officials, the billing to the government by defense contractors of varied entertainments and extraordinary costs, the \$7,600 coffee pots, the \$640 toilet covers and the like.

Exactly how much tax do these defense contracting giants pay? It was reported recently that General Dynamics, currently the largest defense supplier, has paid no income tax since 1972. Has it? How much have the others paid?

The Democrats tried throughout the 1984 campaign to bring out facts about the "sleaze factor" in the Reagan regime. They even had TV commercials listing some of the leading cases of corruption in the Reagan administration. They failed to interest the public. After all, media celebrities had not made it an issue.

Media aided the Reagan re-election in yet another way. There were even more polls than even before, during 1984, virtually one every few days. As always, however, there were no probes, no "open-ended" questions asked of the public. The structure of questions and sequence were frequently biased. Far more was concluded from sub-groups than should be justified. In the absence of probes, conclusions were left to the commentators. One of the persistent contradictions was that while a large number of those interviewed said they disagreed with Reagan's policies, they still would vote for him. TV commentators discussed this and concluded that it was because Reagan appealed to people personally, that he had charisma, while Mondale was considered dull. The commentators never considered the fact that importance on issues such as unemployment, economy, nuclear war, attitude towards the Soviets, as always, were placed by the public in the order of priority that TV news commentators had given them in the preceding days.

More people favored Reagan after each poll result; as usual, the bandwagon effect was profound. Even after Reagan's woeful performance at the first debate, when he stammered, forgot the question, made serious factual errors, seemed frightened, there was hardly any shift in the opinion polls. People wanted to be with the winning side. They wanted also to be in tune with their favorite media commentators. And it was obvious whom these celebrities favored. "People like to be



told what to think" Eugene Meyer, the owner of *Washington Post* (father of Katherine Graham) had said. Media, especially TV, certainly did that.

While millions saw Mondale trounce a confused Reagan, especially in that first debate, the public preferred the image established in their minds of "Rawhide"\* Reagan, of the Western sagas, with his patriotic fervor, his great optimism about America and its wonderful people. The Reagan strategists spent incalculable amounts in advertising (no longer are budgets of "friends" and "supporters" and the PACs who advertise for a politician subject to be considered part of his campaign spendings). They broke new grounds, with fifteen and thirty minute advertising films on Reagan, each at a cost of several million dollars in airtime alone, very skillful spectacles with no expense spared, in which music and skilled photography expressed and stirred emotions, as did the voice-over commentators and the carefully chosen performers ("ordinary people"); they projected the "Rawhide" Reagan profile, tall in the saddle, as part of a triumvirate with God and Country. There were no issues discussed, but people did not want that. It was much more appealing and entertaining, more *flattering* to the American people than the dull and mundane issues discussions that the Democratic contender kept wanting to have.

Richard Nixon's strategists had planned it all in 1968. It was just more skilled and sophisticated now, with more advanced weapons. "Most national issues.... bore the average voter" Nixon advertising chief, Treleaven, had said in 1968. "Its a farce, a delicious farce" said Jim Sage, Nixon's aide. Raymond Price, Nixon's speech writer had assessed the needs in a memo: "People are stirred by the legend, including the living legend, not by the man himself. It is the aura that surrounds the charismatic figure more than it is *the figure itself* that draws the followers. Our task is to build that aura..."

They had set the track for their teammates of the Reagan camp to follow. No doubt some of the Reagan camp are veterans of the packaging of Nixon. After all, who is more qualified than they, not only in the positive experiences they have gained but the dangers of discovery that Joe McGinniss' expose and Watergate provided?

"This is the beginning of a whole new concept" Roger Ailee, Nixon aide is reported to have told McGinniss (then working for Nixon) in 1968. "This is it. This is the way they [Presidents] will be elected for ever more. The next guys up [for election] will have to be performers."

No doubt they have all tried. But Reagan is the most popular President in recent history. He is a performer par excellence, a professional among amateurs.

(iv)

During the last two months of the 1984 campaign, both Ferraro and Mondale accused media frequently of showing obvious bias in favor of Reagan. The issues were not being discussed, they also said. All the Democratic leaders in fact fretted and fumed. They talked of Reagan's "teflon" presidency, to which none of its many errors and corruption seemed to stick. Why, asked Mondale once, was Jimmy Carter held personally responsible for everything that happened during his presidency, most of it

\* According to *The New York Times*, Reagan's aides have given him this nickname and use it when they do not wish others to know who they may be talking about.



not of his doing, while so much of the nation's ills, which can be directly traced to Reagan's policies, are not attributed to Reagan himself? Mondale also complained often about TV's glorified coverage of the Reagan campaign, and the sharply negative coverage of his own. Much of the "teflon" effect was no doubt due to television's reluctance to associate Reagan himself with any negatives in his administration and media's failure to inform the public of grave consequences for future generations from most of the current policies. But in some important ways, the "teflon" effect may have been an indirect result of another media policy.

We have noted earlier, how commercial interests are best served by glorifying the presidency, creating in effect an "imperial" presidency. Such glorification augments public attention to White House news, especially on TV, thereby increasing audience size. While TV and major media had, in their abhorrence for Carter, reflected, if anything, a contemptuous image of Carter (which too served to keep audience attention), it has helped Reagan's strategists greatly by creating the image of "a person larger than life, the stuff of legend". Those familiar with Reagan's habitual howlers, his limited abilities prior to his election in 1980, have watched in amazement as Reagan's strategists and major media have repackaged Reagan into a strong, forceful leader, who thinks deep thoughts and while he may delegate authority, he makes the decisions and is at the helm of the nation's affairs. It took no time at all to create this metamorphosis. Television power can work such miracles especially when it has the best image-making talents to implement it.

In the case of Reagan as President, the public has not offered any resistance to this metamorphosis. Many Americans have always yearned for Royalty, an Imperial Presidency, a "touch of Camelot". The purposes of the Op-Con strategists, media's commercial interests and the people's yearnings have all been served by the creation of an Imperial Presidency.

Reagan looks and acts like a formidable leader. He allows others to look into the details of management; is that not what a monarchic figure should do? So he takes a lot of holidays, but does not the Queen of England? In fact, to those many Americans who see in the creation of an Imperial Presidency the uplift of their own social status, what could be more heartening (and vote-worthy) than to see President Reagan riding side by side with the Queen of England, two rulers of equal status? Or to hear the frequent words of adulation for the President from the British Prime Minister?

And he has, it has been said, achieved great respect, mixed perhaps with a little fear, from the NATO allies, become the true leader of the White World; he has spanked the Third World into varying degrees of submission and put the fear of God in them. America is back to being Number 1.

From the lofty heights of this Imperial Presidency, the public does not expect the former Hollywood actor to be involved in the mundane, the routine of administration, even perhaps to be on top of facts and figures and current affairs. And so, when Mondale and the other Democrats accused him of being responsible for the corruption, the dangerous economic and foreign policies, the public was not convinced that the Imperial President should be expected to be responsible for what his subordinates might be doing (if, that is, they are on the wrong track). No one disputes the fact that his policies favor the very rich. But by now the very rich American is almost an aristocrat (does not the worldwide popularity of "Dallas", "Dynasty" and the like, prove that social acceptance?); somehow it adds to the status of the average American to have an upper class who are favored by the Imperial President. The public loves Reagan because he exudes such tremendous optimism; he

is convinced that all Americans will soon be very rich, and therefore presumably upper class. The American public enjoy his humor, his love for the country, his flattery of all Americans. To many Americans, Mondale became an irritant, depressing in his pessimism, talking facts and issues, fears and tears of compassion, jarring Reagan's pleasing scenario. They would much rather ignore dull Mondale and his ties to Special Interests. And they did.

In many ways Reagan's presidency is no different from that of constitutional monarchies, where the head of state is a ceremonial figurehead. There is however a difference. In constitutional monarchies, the executive powers of the government are in the hands of elected officials. The figurehead has no powers. Reagan has enormous powers to use. In the Reagan regime, he is the elected executive, but the real rulers who formulate his policies and his strategies, who plan what he should say and do, are not elected officials. Some of the names are known, others are not.

Some such as Henry Kissinger perhaps wield more power now behind the scenes than when they held high appointed positions. So, too, do military hawks, like Edward Teller, who developed the hydrogen bomb, has been a longtime advocate of a "winnable" nuclear war, and rejected the objections of the opponents to nuclear arms as "merely moral". Teller is now reportedly a Grand Old Man in Defense circles, not just as a scientist but as a military strategist.

Reagan continues to be the ideal spokesman for the policies, happily distorting facts and figures to persuade the public. It works, so he does more of the same. "Reagan [would] pass a polygraph test because, in a triumph of belief over reality, he seems to have persuaded himself that all his contrived anecdotes and funny numbers are accurate" say the authors (Gail MacColl and Mark Green) of a recent book *There He Goes Again: Ronald Reagan's Reign of Error* (Patheon, 1985). The authors provide 300 documented errors of fact by Ronald Reagan.\*

Media, too, has covered many of his "mis-statements of facts", over the years. Even the public knows this now, but has either come to forgive this trait, or enjoy the "funny numbers" more than facts.

Enough, then, has been written about the falsified facts and figures of Mr. Reagan for those who are interested to read. What we need to consider here are some of the claims made by this President and the contradictions in matters of policy. It suggests the grim possibility that after incalculable hours of T.V. viewing over thirty-five years, the American public's reasoning ability is in serious jeopardy; literally.

For instance, Mr Reagan has campaigned from the time he ran for Governor in 1966 that he was entering politics because he was against "big spenders" of public money, against heavy taxes, that he was for a balanced budget. Yet, as Governor of California, he signed the largest tax bill in the history of that State. He left that office with the State heavily in debt. It was the frugal policies of his successor, Democratic Governor Jerry Brown (son of former Governor Pat Brown), which revived the finances of California, creating in fact a healthy \$6 billion surplus, a surplus incidentally that was almost entirely used up in the Jarvis-Republican campaign for Proposition 13, which resulted in such dire shortages in essential public services that most of the surplus were used up by 1981.

\* Can Reagan pass a polygraph test? Angry about leaks, Reagan has just ordered all senior officials to undergo a polygraph test (test of truthfulness). But he excluded himself and then Schultz, when the latter threatened to resign.



Then, as a presidential candidate, Reagan denounced Carter's \$29 billion budget deficit as shameful and deplorable. He insisted that he would quickly balance the budget by 1983. Mr. Reagan's average budget deficit since taking office has been nearly ten times that of Carter, his accumulated deficit is larger than all of the cumulative deficit since the nation was founded two hundred years ago. His deficit in 1983 alone was \$263,000,000,000. But it is still Mr. Reagan who talks about a constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget every year! And the voters continue to applaud this claim, as they did all through his 1980 and 1984 campaign.

Mr Reagan has had powerful support from fervent evangelists and their mass audiences, Church groups and the Right-To-Life lobby because he opposes the choice of abortion to be available to the mother. And he opposes the Equal Rights Amendment for women. Do his supporters know that it was Governor Reagan who signed the extremely liberal pro-Abortion Bill into law in California?

We might consider just a few more examples, very briefly. He claims to be evenhanded, for the poor, for the flag and American prosperity. It would take a volume to detail all the instances of how his administration has cruelly reduced or ended help for the poor, the elderly and the handicapped, from aid to the disabled, to school lunches for the poor, to programs (proven successful) for the education of slum children, all of course in the name of reducing Government waste. And there are more cuts to come. In 1981, his administration set about to deliberately increase unemployment in order to reduce inflation, causing the highest unemployment since the Great Depression. Fragrant policies of favoring the very rich and very Big Business in regulations and tax breaks (now even tax "credits" can be bought and sold between business empires, *legally*) have resulted in Big Business profit-making even beyond the boom period of the "oil shortage" hysteria of 1973 and 1979. As individuals, the very rich have fared as well. In one debate, Mondale pointed out that Reagan's 1981 tax allowances gave \$60,000,000 in tax relief over three years to those with income over \$200,000 annually. In fact, in 1982, there were according to the IRS, 207,291 individuals and couples whose *reported* incomes were over \$200,000 a year, up 70% from 1979. Of them, 299 paid no taxes through tax loopholes, and most others paid meagre taxes, comparable to the lowest wage-earners. In 1983, 3,170 individuals whose income that year was over \$1 million, paid no taxes.

On the other hand, those living under poverty level have increased from less than 13% during the Carter years to over 16% now, despite the "prosperity". Even small farmers (not the large conglomerates who own most farms) who once supported Reagan so strongly, have lost 50% of their income from 1981-1984. The claim that some of the very rich have paid more taxes under Reagan is entirely and deliberately misleading in its implication. The fact is that despite the increased tax breaks, the reason some of the very rich have paid more is because they have made so much money that even the miniscule percent they pay now in taxes is more in aggregate than they did before.

The minorities have lost much of the gains they had made in civil rights over the past two decades. And they will lose more. The Supreme Court appointments made by Reagan have already tilted its composition even more to "strict constructionists" or "conservative". Reagan has even replaced the three directors who comprised the Civil Rights Commission with his own appointees, despite protests of minority leaders who are convinced that their past record and current views are prejudiced (one of the new directors was in fact suggested to Carter and turned down by him).

And then there is foreign trade. With the extreme problems the U.S. currently



faces in record trade deficits ever since Reagan took office, it is understandable that some controls must be maintained and efforts made to increase U.S. exports. But how is this consistent with Reagan's incessant claim that Business must have freedoms without government interference? Ever since World War 2, the Dulles-Nixon diatribes at the Third World have been well-known, the claim that free enterprise is critical, that even the infant industries in the emerging new nations must have foreign competition to improve their quality. Reagan voices opinions against protectionism, even as he accedes to it.

Now, not only do we have severe "protectionist" policies against foreign imports into the U.S., heavy duties and shrinking quotas, but arm-twisting in the North-South dialogue and through international lending institutions, is aimed to discourage exports from the Third World to the industrialized nations.\*

It could be argued that when loans are sought even from international lending institutions, we have the right to lay down the rules in our interest, if we can. But then, what of Japan? Japan, about whom TV had so many programs of jokes and ridicule for so many years, is now the monster because it has been too efficient, too successful. There is continuous scathing criticism in media and by politicians of Japan's own protectionist policies. We have been successful in forcing the Japanese into setting up plants in the U.S., training U.S. personnel, to collaborate with the U.S. auto giants in manufacture, but we continue to criticize the low American exports to Japan. And Japan continues to plead that (i) their import rules are aimed to control quality, yet they have relaxed them in many ways to allow American products to enter Japan and (ii) American exporters do not still study the Japanese market; instead they rely on U.S. Government arm-twisting to get their products into Japan.

Perhaps the ultimate irony is our aggressive and ongoing attempt to try and make the Japanese allocate more towards "defense" spendings. The Japanese government is reluctant, because the Japanese people are strongly against it. No doubt Japan would buy American arms with more "defense" allocation, but it was America who drew up the new Japanese constitution after World War 2, making it illegal for Japan to have armed forces! Now it is the Japanese who want to abide by that constitution and we who are forcing them not to do so.

Is it possible that the real solution to our trade deficit problems lies in the fact that the giant conglomerates' problem (aside from the group-narcissism and complacency discussed earlier) is that they are too big, too unwieldy, too *spoilt* due to the continuing over-indulgence of U.S. Government at home and abroad? As a result of Reagan's severe controls on auto imports and Japanese collaboration, American auto giants made record profits in the past two years (their advertising quickly claimed they had beaten the Japanese with superior American "know-how"). The top executives each just as quickly allocated over \$1 million bonuses to themselves, as reward. On the other hand, Chrysler Corporation, bankrupt and relatively small, was able to genuinely pull itself out by the bootstraps, truly study the market and meet requirements (albeit aided greatly by government restrictions on imports) and has made of itself a great success story. Chrysler was smaller and had no alternative but to become flexible, not merely profit-oriented.

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\* In fact, there are currently, high pressure tactics being used on Capitol Hill by Reagan's White House to gamble through a multi-billion dollar subsidy to agricultural corporations, so that they can boost exports through lower price.

Is it possible that the future of American business success lies, not in encouraging the very Big Business empires to get bigger and monopolistic (through take-overs and mergers) but to encourage smaller companies to become the forefront of trade? Could they not be more flexible, less profit-oriented, less unwieldy, more willing to meet market requirements abroad, with the proverbial American "know-how"?

Commercial TV's very effective dragnet in its programming of recent years has entirely reversed the negative image of the very rich and very Big Business in the public mind that the late '60s had ushered in. Now, with even more conviction than in the 1950s, most Americans adore the glittering extravagant living of the very rich as portrayed in TV programs, especially the very rich tycoon families — the international success of soap operas like *Dallas*,\* *Dynasty* and *Santa Barbara* draw even greater adulation and pride in reflected glory for most Americans. So even the "Trickle Down Theory" (Let Big Business Make More Money So It Can Pass On Some Of It To The Masses) is generally acceptable, more so because of the terror that was generated throughout the 1970s by media's forecasts of imminent depression. Nevertheless public awareness and concern regarding critical issues such as Big Business mergers and favoritism, scandalous tax inequalities, the exploding budget deficit and its bigamous spouse, military spendings, would have been a major problem for the President had not his strategists used all their machiavellian skills to overcome reality.

Because there has been awareness of the battle between former administrations against monopolists, and some awareness of the excesses committed in the past era by the monopolists, there had been great public concern against Big Business mergers and concentration of power. The AT&T diversification ruling changed all that. AT&T, the giant utilities conglomerate has, as we have seen earlier, had hard battles with some administrations. Now came the strange ruling against AT&T (the utilities giant, not to be confused with the IT&T empire) in the courts in 1982. Reagan's Justice Department had worked out a deal whereby AT&T had to divest itself of the local telephone companies around the nation, if it wished to hold on to long-distance business.

Predictably, this separation has led to great suffering for the public, in poor service, separate billings, extra costs, the never-ending argument from the local telephone companies around the U.S. that all problems have arisen due to this divorce. And predictably, this never-ending daily irritation has made the public angry *with the idea of severance of conglomerates from their subsidiaries*. AT&T, in the meanwhile has gone on to greener pastures (quite legal) of acquiring high-tech subsidiaries.

The epidemic of Big Business mergers in the past two years have now set new records in size and frequency. In 1983 alone, there were 2,533 mergers registered. No one complains except to reflect the awe of media commentators at the new record billions being paid for giant mergers. In 1984 two mergers broke previous records, the Texaco-Getty merger for \$10.1 billion, then that of Gulf Oil-Standard Oil (Calif) for \$13.2 billion.

In our world of illusions and "me-first" values, one irritant for the public that cannot be fantasized away is the scandalous tax breaks for the very rich. During the presidential debate in 1984, Mondale stressed his tax reform plans, how Carter's

\* *Dallas* represents yet another milestone in the power of TV and skilled image-making. It has altered entirely the image of Texas even in the eyes of the delighted Texans themselves.



tax reform to make the very rich pay their due share had been aborted; Reagan countered all that by saying that what was needed was a simplified tax structure which would ease the problems for all taxpayers and save on bureaucratic waste (both very close to the voter's heart).

Shortly after the elections, Reagan's Treasury Secretary Donald Regan (pronounced Reegan) went on TV and in a series of news conferences to present a Tax Reform Plan; it has many good features that many liberals supported. It reduced the current fourteen tiers to just three; it would favor the very rich reducing the percent that they were technically required to pay in the upper end of the scale (the maximum now would be 35% not 50%). One of the most frequently used loopholes — capital gains — would, however, be taxed at the same rate as other income.

Strangely, despite media probes, the White House would not comment on the New Tax Plan. Then in March 1985, amidst great media fanfare (the most courageously, daring tax reform plan in thirty years, some in media said), President Reagan announced his own Tax Plan. At first glance it looked the same as his former Treasury Secretary's Plan (Donald Regan had since been removed from the Treasury and been made Chief of Staff). The President's Plan also had the same three tiers instead of fourteen. It also had the same tax schedule. Looking deeper, however, one saw differences. For instance, Capital Gains would be taxed but at a much lower scale than other income. Those with income over \$200,000 a year would pay 10.7% less. "Charity deductions" a favorite shelter for the very rich, remained. Only those smaller deductions which the average person makes (less than \$300) would not be allowed. Many wondrous donations made and accepted as "charity" would then continue. And now, payment of State and City income tax could not be deducted from gross income for computation of Federal income tax. This means that all income groups, in the large cities, are stiff where there are stiff City and State taxes, would suffer the most. Needless to add, the lower incomes, who are most concentrated in such large cities, would be the most penalised. The least affected would be the large corporations (for whom major cities usually provide attractive tax incentives to keep them there) and the very rich (whose main residence is usually in the suburbs). Mr. Reagan hopes to get approximately \$39 billion more by 1990 from big city dwellers through this provision. While Mr. Reagan won 49 out of the 50 states in 1984, he lost in all the major cities to Mr. Mondale.

Was this entire scenario planned in this way? How could the Treasury Secretary Regan (as he was then), a Reagan appointee and close friend, have presented the Treasury plan which the President was entirely non-committal about after its presentation, but which he has now used in its overall format, but with some significant alterations? Is it too farfetched to wonder if that first Treasury Plan was intended to pleasantly surprise and draw approval from even some liberals, then to alter it? Naturally the liberal opposition would be critical of the changes, but if the Op-Con strategists are convinced (as they have been since the Nixon campaigns) that the public does not look into issues or details, would it not be clever to create that vague awareness upon the public mind that the Plan had been acceptable to the liberals so it must be very fair, therefore the President's new Plan must also be fair? No doubt the loudest complaint would come from the lower and middle income

\* Media is now so convinced that image rather than public knowledge determines votes, that *The Washington Post* reporting public reaction to the Treasury Tax Plan said "of those interviewed including those unfamiliar with the proposal, 53 percent said they favor it." (Italics added)



urbanites, but these are the people who voted for Mondale. We can only wait and see just where the Plan finally ends up, with further modifications. Certainly any reform plan will be an improvement over the current scandalous one. The danger is that any new plan, once introduced, will be very hard to change for many more years. And it is hard to believe that with the Op-Cons in power, the real gut changes that are so critical — especially those that would discourage corporate empires from becoming even larger — will ever be done. Mr. Reagan is on record saying that he believes only humans, not corporations, should be taxed.

With an annual budget deficit now nearing \$300,000,000,000 everyone, including the American public, knows something dangerous is going on. They feel good, however, about the fact that the dollar is stronger than ever before, that media experts are optimistic even about the fact that a lot of foreign capital is coming into the country. Coupled with Reagan's great optimism, they feel safe. Media has strongly backed the Reagan administration by reports of a great resurgence in the economy, its sudden strength, its output growth, especially the record 10.1% growth in the first quarter of 1984 (it declined to about 2.8% in the last quarter of 1984).

However, his own economist Dr. Feldstein, head of Reagan's Council of Economic Advisers, after failing to convince Mr. Reagan of the dangers, went public to state that he was very concerned, wanted new taxes to avoid a catastrophe. Reagan, who in his 1984 debates categorically said he would not increase taxes, has merely accepted Dr. Feldstein's resignation. "No more tax increase" is a great vote-getting theme. Reneging on that would be too obvious.

The gut problem today with the deficit is simple to understand. Because of the huge deficit every year, the Federal government has to borrow enormous amounts each year. On top of all that today, *huge corporate acquisitions require bank financing*. With the shortage, banks raise interest rates for the public. The public (and small businesses) have a hard time borrowing and paying such high rates. Foreign investors, finding the interest rates so much higher, and the great tax breaks for Big Business in the U.S., the lax enforcements of regulations, are quick to invest in Big Business. There is more foreign currency coming in, so the dollar, now fluctuating like any commodity, continues to rise against foreign currencies.

But with that more expensive dollar, foreign trade suffers even more. Despite the stringent "protectionist" policies, the quotas and the high duties on foreign goods, the demand for foreign products (cheaper because of the high dollar rate) is higher than ever; correspondingly, American goods cost a lot more in foreign countries. More than ever, there is a loss in foreign trade.

The trade deficit (announced in 1985) was \$123,300,000,000 in 1984, nearly double the record deficit of \$69,400,000,000 in 1983 and three times greater than the previous record of \$42,700,000,000 deficit in 1982. Each year of the Reagan regime has been setting new records in trade deficit. The only country with which we actually came out with a trade surplus was Saudi Arabia. Current estimates show that 1985 trade deficit will set new records. In 1985 the United States became a debtor nation, (like some of the very poor developing countries) for the first time since 1917.

There are many other dangerous ramifications; for instance, banks cannot (or will not) lend except at very steep rates to the poorer countries. Some of the South American countries, like Brazil, have almost gone insolvent through trade loss. ("protectionist" policies abroad) and problems at home. Such insolvencies could crush the international banking system, not just the insolvent country. Already some of the more adventurous American banks are going under, for the first time since the

Great Depression. In 1984 a record 79 banks failed. Citicorp estimates that in 1984, U.S. banks actually became borrowers by \$6 billion. Even European countries suffer because of all the drain of investments coming into the U.S. from abroad. And the balance of trade of some such as Britain is as shoddy as the U.S.

The primary culprit then is the record budget deficit in the U.S.. And the obvious cause of these record-breaking deficits in the past four years is the record-breaking defense budget. Mr. Reagan insists on his own arithmetic, however, which the public buys, as it has since 1980. More incentives to Big Business, he says, will make the economy grow faster; more income will generate more tax money and the budget deficit will shrink.\* Most of the media supports his attempted forecasts of euphoria — no doubt convinced that public optimism would generate more consumer spending and therefore a growth in the economy.

No one has attempted to determine how much of the sudden leap in the first quarter of 1984 was due to military spendings. After all, when \$1,007,009,000,000 are spent in four years on the military, is that not likely to boost the economic figures, directly and indirectly? And cynical though it may seem, is it not good business for Big Business to ensure Mr. Reagan's popularity at the right time?

The plain truth is that aside from all the other reasons, Cold War chills had to be re-established, and the military budget had to be sent to astronomical heights to boost the *economy* by such means. It is a matter of history that the U.S. economy has boomed whenever it has been put on a wartime footing, interspersed of course with pockets of recession when Big Business greed over-reached the economy. It happened in World War 1, World War 2, the Korean War; for the giant conglomerates that came to be empires, the Cold War chills of the 1950s and the present have been the most rewarding.

In the past, it has not always been easy to prove the point, but in the Reagan administration, there is such confidence in the "me-first" mood of the public that the economic benefit of the huge military budget are openly used as an argument. Each time Congress questions the new increase, Defense Secretary Weinberger argues that any attempt to "cut back" the budget recommended will mean loss of jobs, cut in pay. A nervous Congress, concerned about being held responsible for job losses, is then unwilling to make drastic cuts. In selling the extra billions required for 21 more MX missiles in the Spring of 1985 which Congress had earlier rejected, even British papers reported that the major U.S. Defense contractors had been made to prepare detailed plans to show that they would set up plants in all the 50 States and therefore provide jobs everywhere for the manufacture of these missiles. Weinberger, it is reported, then took these plans to Congress, pointing out that all the 50 states would have more jobs, and that if Congress refused the sanction, all the nation's voters would know that it had been responsible for those losses in new jobs. The Congress sanctioned the new missiles.

It will probably be the same, when it comes to the Star Wars program. Even some of the dutifully obedient leadership in Europe, who owe a lot to the American

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\* In a recent survey of 238 large Corporations who recorded profits, the Citizens for Tax Justice, Washington, reports that it found no relationship between tax incentives and corporate investments for growth; 58 companies surveyed paid no taxes from 1981-1983, yet *cut* their investments by 19.3% in that period. Another 50 companies, who paid more taxes than the others, *increased* investments by 4.3%.



Op-Con for their own politician victories, have raised questions about Star Wars. Slowly their resistance has, however, weakened. Is that backsliding genuine, or is it intended to help later convince their own public of their *reluctant* support, after learning more of the facts? Their weak economies need a boost. Only time will tell.

Star Wars. Sold by Mr. Reagan as a defense program, a peace program which will ensure security for the American public. What could be more appealing in a "me-first" era? The Hollywood-inspired concept also carries thrills, no doubt, for the hundreds of millions of devotees who made the Hollywood space fantasies of the last decade such record-breaking box-office hits.

The reality is frighteningly different. First because it is not in fact a pure defense strategy. Whatever is learnt in its research can and will be used for various offensive weaponry of the future. Secondly such "defense" security will cause us to be more aggressive in our posture against the Russians. They will develop their own Star War program — they already have started in retaliation, they say. We developed the Atom Bomb; they followed. We made the Hydrogen Bomb; and they made it, too.. What makes us think they will not formulate a similar or even better Star War technology? All it will mean is widening the arms race into space. And finally how certain can we be that the system works? It will depend on the most complex series of computers, which must be precise, infallible. Does our track record really convince us that we develop infallible machines? How many inaccurate "Red-Alerts" have there been in just the past five years? How many leaks from "infallible" nuclear installations? There will be no way to check the infallibility of the Star Wars computers or even their accuracy, except when there is an attack, the real thing.

Again, despite the strong congressional opposition in the initial stages, Mr. Reagan's public popularity has made Congress agree to initial allocations of \$26,000,000,000 for initial Star Wars research.

For the Op Can strategists, of course, it is yet another brilliant ploy. It caters to space fantasy thrills for the young. It makes many Americans no doubt feel less insecure about dangers to themselves. Even those currently afraid of the escalating arms race may therefore be less vocal because they are assured of Reagan's protective Star Wars defense system of the future. More jobs and less anxiety will ensure more public support and as the program is carefully sold, even more record-breaking military allocations will be assured for many years to come in much the same way as NASA's military experiments have been casually accepted on the coat-tails of its remarkable breakthroughs in space exploration.

It would be argued that if the heavy military allocations, despite all the waste and corruption, do eventually strengthen our defense and provide a boost to the economy, why not let military spendings be entrenched forever in the nation's economy? Ever since Nixon and Kissinger, faced with the accelerated decline in foreign trade due to Japanese and German technological challenge, commenced the aggressive program of selling military hardware like any export commodity, arms sales have become one of the most profitable export boosters for the U.S., (slowed, though not stopped, by Carter) and now for some European countries who have learnt the same practice.

Setting new records each year, the current worldwide military expenditure is now nearly \$800 billion. The Third World bought 9% of world arms sale in 1971 (despite the heavy military expenditure of the Arab countries even then to counter Israel's military might). Now the Third World buys 19% of all arms exported. Considering the many economic, social and psychological malaise that these countries now struggle under, the wide disparity between the rich and poor, the extreme materialism and



chauvinism generated by their media (especially TV) learnt from the U.S., the deep inferiority complex and its many hazards, the growing irritation due to unfair "North-South" trade practices, the epidemic of unemployment (50% of the Third World's 800 million labor force is unemployed, according to ILO), are we creating a time bomb here even as we employ strategies to increase arms sales? It could be argued that we reluctantly supply arms and only to friendly nations, but we know this is not true. We use the supply of sophisticated weaponry as clout in our foreign policy but not regular arms sales. In fact our arms dealers compete aggressively with those of Europe; elaborate exhibitions, with sophisticated gimmickry and a lot of wining and dining of prospective buyers is a regular practice. It is Very Big Business.

Let us then consider one important economic factor which has been written about over and over again, focussed upon strongly by eminent economists like Prof. Galbraith, Dr. Leontier, Dr. Hoffman, Prof. Melman and many others (but hardly ever allowed on commercial TV of course). And that is a simple factor of employment through the military. It is now accepted, even by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics that \$1 billion spent on the military generally creates about 75,000 jobs. However, \$1 billion invested in civil engineering produces an average of 110,000 jobs; the same amount produces 112,000 jobs in consumer goods production.

The last time the U.S. resorted to re-channeling heavy military spendings into such peaceful areas was in the moral glow after World War 2 (until the Cold War began in earnest of course). But in that brief period of shift to a civilian economy, there was no fall in employment. In fact it was a period in which great strides were made in uplifting the American populace not only to new levels of living standards but to a new record in higher education.

The fact that, according to U.N. statistics, just 10% of what is currently spent by the world in military expenditure annually would irradicate hunger, disease and illiteracy from the earth may perhaps not be very persuasive. It is an argument which is "merely moral".

Mr Reagan has now responded strongly to the need for reducing the budget deficit. Even as his annual budget deficit approaches \$300,000,00,000 each year, he says loud and clear that budget deficits are deplorable; he leads everyone in his demand for a constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget. And so, no doubt, there are, even today, very many voters who feel the budget deficit could *not* be his fault.

He sides wholeheartedly with Defense Secretary Weinberger and refuses to cut anything from the Defense budget, each year. But he feels a great deal more can be saved elsewhere, especially in reducing "paper work" and the bureaucracy of regulations, and in social services.

Carter began making drastic cuts into the overblown bureaucracy, starting from the White House itself, where he reduced staff and many luxuries. Reagan has reinstated the size of the White House staff and luxuries with a vengeance, but he has been severe on some others. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Highway Traffic Safety Commission (NHTSC), The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Federal Communication Commission (FCC), etc., all those whose jobs have been to regulate, monitor and control Big Business excesses have had their staff and budget cut by 25-30%. And he has saved by cutting off or severely cutting down on social services such as aid to the handicapped, school lunches, programs that aid slum children (such as Operation Head Start) despite proof that they worked; he has cut Federal aid for urban development, public transport,

Medicaid and Medicare, food stamps for the poor, education loans. And he has drastically cut loans to small businesses (in fact the office is about to be closed down).

Even the laws and regulations that Reagan has rescinded or changed to reduce bureaucratic waste are significant. "Health and safety laws were passed by Congress to save lives and reduce injuries; the Reagan Administration is doing the opposite", said Joan Claybrook, Director of National Highway Traffic and Safety Commission under President Carter. To start with, Mr. Reagan has elected to ignore one out of every three new laws introduced by Mr. Carter in the last thirty months of his presidency (Carter, it must be stressed, was working hard to reduce waste but the new laws were felt to be essential).

To further ease the way for auto makers, the Reaganites' new rule says car bumpers need only be strong enough to withstand collision at 2.5 miles per hour, not 5 mph as previously required. In 1981, the Reaganites even tried to rescind the Carter regulation that all cars from 1984 onwards must have either seat belts or air bags. Fortunately the Courts over-ruled the Reaganites, on this one (a rare exception).

To reduce paper waste, Mr. Reagan decided that regulations requiring labels to carry health hazard warnings are not necessary. For instance, Carter had proposed a law requiring pharmaceutical companies to insert warnings of side effects on some drugs. Reagan rescinded that.

When a new President takes office, aside from nominating top new officials, he can sometimes make many new appointments in various Federal departments and agencies. Mr. Reagan has broken all records by the number of his new appointees. Some of his appointments argue total contempt for public intelligence, such as that of James Watt to Cabinet rank as Interior Secretary when Watt previously headed a Colorador group fighting pollution control; or that of Thorne Aucter as head of Occupation Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) when Aucter's own construction company had been cited 48 times for safety violations by previous OSHA administrations. Now by 1982, OSHA had reduced its citations by 91% and penalties by 78%. Reagan's appointment of James Beggs, Director of General Dynamics, the largest defense contractor, to Head of NASA tells its own frightening story. Career officials (who stay on despite changes in administration) often include highly dedicated individuals. Mr. Reagan has cut the staff and budget drastically in various departments and agencies, and ordered that all new regulations must be routed to his Director on OMB David Stockman for approval first. Mr. Stockman is well-known for his fierce adherence to Op-Con objectives with regard to laws governing Big Business. "They just decided not to enforce the law" quipped Representative Gore. For instance, nursing home inspection has been cut by 70% despite the frequent cases of poor care and malpractice that have been reported in the health care business in recent years. With the galloping rise in costs, health care has become one of the most profit-making industries in recent times. Conglomerates own a series of hospitals which function like any chain store operation. The largest, Humana Corporation, owned over 90 hospitals at last count. There have been frequent instances of Big Business hospitals refusing entry to emergency patients brought to their doors, when their insurance coverage is felt inadequate; in some cases, deaths have resulted from such refusals.

The drastic cuts in regulatory agencies have led to ridiculous attempts to insist that quality has not suffered. For instance meat and poultry inspectors have been so drastically reduced that they are now required to inspect and approve chicken at the rate of 105 a minute!



With reduced staff and Reagan appointees in charge, the Food & Drug Administration seems mainly concerned about not hampering Big Business. Periodically, there are scandals. Despite evidence that its side effects might be toxic, the FDA allowed Oraflex, an arthritis pain remedy, to be marketed in 1982. Then there were 61 deaths in Britain reportedly from its usage. The product had to be recalled. In another case, that of Nusoy, an infant formula, the product had to be recalled after 50,000 cans had been distributed because it lacked essential vitamins that protect babies from convulsive seizures.

In the opinion of many consumer advocates and environmentalists the Reagan administration has not only reversed many of the gains made by the consumer movements in past years, but in some instances, it has reversed even behind the scandalous practices of the 1950s.

On the other hand, some bizarre actions have been taken by the Reaganites to protect the public from some drugs. Needless to say, these are not drugs marketed by the Roundtable lobby. In an action against illegally grown marijuana plants, the Reaganites ordered Paraquat (a highly dangerous gas) sprayed from helicopters and planes over the suspected areas in Georgia and Kentucky. It was quickly ended at the angry reaction of the local population. Not only were the lives of would-be pot smokers placed in jeopardy, but at least some of the poison gas sprayed from the air was found to spread anywhere winds took it and descend miles from where it was sprayed on the crops.

And there have been the usual, periodical cases of major corporate cover-ups of known hazards in their product which they have not revealed for years. That had recently happened with Ford Motor Company (Pinto), Firestone (tire), Manville (asbestos). Now, during a class action suit filed by 20,000 veterans of the Vietnam War, their widows and children (the suit was filed to claim for cancer caused merely from contact with Agent Orange — dioxin — which they had bombarded in incalculable amounts upon the Vietnamese) it was found that Dow Chemical Company in a conference back in 1965 with two other dioxin manufacturers, had decided to suppress known dangers of dioxin from becoming public. *The New York Times* published documents in April 1983 to support this charge. Through all those years, Dow's top executives had strongly claimed that there were no side effects from dioxin, except perhaps a mild "rash". Now it was found on examining 113 residents of Imperial, Missouri, (who lived near Times Beach which is heavily polluted with dioxin dumping), that 110 showed abnormalities of blood, liver, kidney failure.

It needs to be repeated: Business prosperity is important for a flourishing national economy. But Big Business excesses not only harm the economy but crush smaller businesses. Yet the skilled image-making of the Reaganites has convinced small businesses too that he is good for them (even as he axes small business loans).

And it needs perhaps to be repeated: It is the job of corporate executives to think first of the interests of their corporation and its profits, always. It is not their job to think first of the public interest. That is the job of government. Adam Smith, the father of free enterprise himself said it best in "Wealth of Nations" more than two hundred years ago, when pointing out the dangers of listening to Business on what rules should or should not prevail in society. It should be done "with great caution [because any such suggestion] comes from an order of men [Businessmen] whose interest is never the same as that of the public, who have generally an interest to deceive and even to oppress the public, and who accordingly have, on many occasions, both deceived and oppressed it".



Are there other areas that Mr. Reagan has looked at to save money in the Federal budget? Yes, he has. He wanted to tax unemployment compensation and there was talk again of cutting Social Security payments to the elderly, but the publicity and resultant anger sobered up the administration.

Let us for a moment examine what has been obtained with \$1,007,900,000,000 spent on the military in four and a half years, which works out to \$28,000 per hour, night and day, seven days a week.

Exactly what have we got for it? According to Reagan's own Republican party Senators Grossley and Kassebaum, Mr. Reagan has provided 76% more money on warship production than Mr. Carter did, but has produced 12% fewer ships; he has provided 48% more money for other fighting ships, but has produced 17 fewer ships than Carter. "We are paying \$700 per standard hour for work normally done in the private sector between \$40 and \$60" they said. According to Jon Connell of *The London Times*, Reagan has bought 6.4% more missiles with a 91.2% increase in budget; 8.8% more military aircraft with a 75% increase in budget; bought 30% more tanks and other combat vehicles from a 147.4% increase in budget.

And then of course, we have the incredible amount of expense allowances, incalculable luxuries and overspendings and unrelated billings by the defense contractors. Retirement pensions for military personnel which cost \$1.2 billion in 1964 cost \$18.0 billion in 1984. Pensioners in private life usually get 56% of lifetime salary in pensions; military personnel get between 149-163%.

And dedicated and sincere individuals in the Pentagon periodically reveal the excessive corruption to the public. Most recently there were revelations of 1984 bulk purchases of regular, ordinary hardware at astronomical prices, such as pliers at \$748 each, hammers at \$436 each, coffee pots at \$7,600 each, toilet seats at \$640 each. The international publicity accorded these latest revelations, at a time when there was extreme need for budget cuts, of course led to heavily publicized Defense Department investigations.

It is clearly not the first time, as we have seen earlier, that such ridiculous prices have been paid by the Defense Department.\* This time there were public "clashes" between Defense and some of its contractors (though, according to a *Washington Post* report secret tapes of at least one conversation between the two parties reveal that the "clash" in this instance at least was staged). However, as a result of one such investigation, General Electric, one of the largest defense contractors, has now pleaded guilty to defrauding the Air Force by filing 108 fake invoices. General Dynamics, the largest defence supplier, has now been found to have overcharged the

\* Periodically, such revelations have surfaced in the past. Senator Proxmire was one who over years looked into government waste and occasionally his findings about military waste were reported. Under Reagan such military waste reached ridiculous heights. Even *Time* magazine, that masthead of Big Business, would voice its own surprise in reporting (July 25, 1983) that "each cap should cost 25 cents, ... the price Pentagon was paying Boeing was \$1,118.26. After switching suppliers, the Air force now pays \$4 for each cap", (one must presumably cheer for the integrity of the Air Force buyers — instead of about 5,000,000% more earlier paid to Boeing, they now had a supplier who charged only 1600% more than market price). "Astounding increases in the price of aircraft engine parts made by Pratt & Whitney: a turbine air seal for the F-111 fighter bomber for example, soared from \$16 to \$3,033.82 in one year. Other soaring charges were not so spectacular. "From 1980 to 1982 for nearly 15,000 aircraft engine parts, 65% of the prices had risen by more than 50%; 4000 items had ballooned, pinion assembly supplied by Bendix Corp jumped from \$31.59 to \$546, a rise of 1,628%. A spare part from Britain's Rolls Royce was marked up from \$3.70 to \$54.75, an increase of 1,380%". Inflation, added *Time*, over this period (1980-1982) was 28.9%. One must presume that the rest was the triumph of Supply Side Economics.

government by "at least" \$75,000,000 in Country Club fees and executive travel. Because of the publicity, 45 defense contractors are now under investigation.

Aside from what is currently being insisted upon as critical military spending, there is that enormous Star Wars program still to come. And now a Chemical War Program. Despite some strong opposition within, Congress, nervous and pliant as a result of Mr. Reagan's resounding re-election popularity, has sanctioned initial allocation for Star War research, of about \$26,000,000,000. And on June 21, 1985 yet another milestone was laid in arms escalation into more dreadful areas, when Congress sanctioned Mr. Reagan's request for the manufacture of chemical weapons — the first time the U.S. will now be making these in 14 years.

What comes next? Germ warfare? There have been great strides made in biotechnology in recent years, much of it certainly great strides for mankind. But ever since Watson and Crick discovered DNA, no one can really tell in what direction clone-making is proceeding in secret. And insofar as virus cloning goes, accidents will happen, as in 1980 when students at the University of California, San Diego, attempting to clone a Sindis virus, supposedly a harmless bug, accidentally developed a Semliki virus (a Sinbis dangerous relative) apparently due to vial contamination.

It could be argued that the development of these war materials are purely for defense purposes. But experience tells us that we get horror-stricken when we first venture out into these areas, then over time, the shock and disgust wears off. Consider, for instance, our blasé acceptance of nuclear stockpiling. There is evidence to suggest that thirty years ago, despite Cold War chills, the public lived in a constant state of daily horror at these monstrosities that could so easily obliterate life.

Today, we still condemn chemical warfare, but what is the extent of our condemnation of this internationally barred agent of death? We do furiously condemn the Soviets when we find evidence of their use of it in Afghanistan, while the Soviets accuse us of using it in Vietnam. Two years ago, there was apparently conclusive evidence satisfactory to European doctors that Iraq had been using poison gas against Iran. The international community condemned it. We condemned it. But that did not stop the Russians from continuing arms supply to Iraq. France continued with its arms supply even including the deadly new missiles to Iraq. And the U.S. which for years had broken diplomatic ties with Iraq not only re-established diplomatic ties with it, but provided it with "favored nation" status in trade.

Periodically, Big Business excesses become even too big for the Reagan Justice Department's lenient treatment. Suddenly, it would appear, the Justice Department decides that some prosecution of white collar crime is essential especially when the victims are other Big Business. So we now have E.F. Hutton, the top rated Wall Street brokers, fined \$2 million and ordered to repay \$8 million to banks it had defrauded. ESM, who dealt with Government bonds, suddenly collapsed and their enormous bonds' portfolios had "disappeared" leading to a series of bank collapses in Ohio. Another bank, the Bank of Boston, was fined \$500,000 for failing to report \$1.2 billion in overseas dealings, suspected organized crime money.

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Some of media does report corporate excesses and military waste when they become known. But, as always, being part of the Big Business world, it must consider self-interest first. Of course it must be critical of Mr Reagan's policies to maintain



credibility; at other times in pursuit of selective morality. But we must know that Mr. Reagan has been particularly indulgent to commercial media in general and TV in particular and for that reason alone enjoys its considerable support. The Federal Communications Commission, which in the late 60s and early 70s had become so active in attempting to control TV's excesses, has now been made virtually extinct. Its Director Fowler, a Reagan appointee, has openly said that the FCC must continue to ease out and leave all decision-making to the TV stations and networks and their advertisers. Even the amount of advertising time allotted in each hour is now left to the discretion of the TV stations and network. Naturally the advertising time has increased and while the public might be vaguely aware of this, no one complains. After all have they not been told so many times that it is "free"? In the Fall of 1984, new top rated game show *Wheel of Fortune* was monitored with a stop watch. It is a half-hour show, but the actual game time worked out to 11½ minutes. The rest was taken up with commercials, descriptions of promoted (prize) products, and so on.

In March 1985, there was an important further relaxation of rules for the TV giants. The new law doubled the number of TV stations any one corporation could own.

The steady increase in TV network advertising rates of 11-13% each year has continued (major advertisers of course make bulk special block rate contracts). In 1971, one 30 second commercial on top rated shows like the *Super Bowl* cost \$110,000; in 1984 one 30 second commercial aired on the *Super Bowl* cost \$500,000.

Now, of course, more than ever, it is wellnigh impossible for smaller companies to afford the type of advertising budget it takes to compete against the giants, even if the company has a better mousetrap.

Insofar as building a truly better mousetrap is concerned, the handwriting is on the wall. In a recent case, a scientist, 29 year old Peter Hagelstein was on his way to develop the world's first X-ray laser. But he got no financial aid. So now he earns dollars instead from a grant to design laser beam weapons, at last report, at Livermore Laboratory.

The amount spent 1984 by U.S. advertisers in buying media time and space alone, reached nearly \$88,000,000,000, compared to \$49 billion in 1979 and \$19 billion in 1970. Proctor & Gamble spent the most again (nearly \$1 billion). P&G's agency of record (main advertising agency) continues to be Compton, now called Saatchi, Saatchi & Compton, whose London office was responsible for that very successful campaign for Margaret Thatcher when she campaigned to oust Labor and become the Prime Minister. It is now one of the world's giant agencies.

Saatchi, Saatchi & Compton have been at the forefront of a major battle being waged in London in the Spring of 1985 to turn BBC into a commercial network. BBC's request for an increase in the license fees (on which it supports itself) was not approved in the full amount by the government. BBC wanted the license fee to be made £65 sterling a year. The government approved £58. BBC argued that it could not manage the quality of programs on this budget. A government-appointed commission felt — according to media reports — that BBC was extravagant in its production spendings. The Peacock Commission has now been appointed by the government, to recommend if BBC should go commercial. Some in media have voiced concern of loss of advertising revenues to themselves if BBC also goes commercial, while others such as Australian newspaper chain tycoon Rupert Murdoch have campaigned heavily to make BBC commercial, as has the Saatchi agency.



It seems as if it is all over. The scenario is remarkably similar to the various stages that America's PBS (the small non-commercial network) had to go through before it became heavily dependent on corporate sponsorship, and now accept commercials too.

It should, in the circumstances, cause no more than a mild surprise to find that McCarthyism and blacklisting is back in style in Britain as in the U. S., as now revealed by the London *Observer* regarding BBC hirings.

But the loss of BBC to commercial interests (as it may well be eventually) is a tragedy of even greater dimensions. Britain's TV fare has been consistently superior to that in the U.S. principally because of the balance that BBC provided, requiring its commercial competitors to be concerned about quality also, and in turn, kept BBC from becoming too staid. It is true that BBC has been slipping more towards commercial fare recently (it even airs more and more popular American programs) but its independence from direct support of commercial interests have helped it maintain a standard recognized everywhere. And the demise of BBC to commercial interests will have far-reaching effects on others, especially in the former colonies, where British media influence still exists even if the American influence dominates. As it is, in some former colonies once TV goes commercial, there is commercialization to a degree that defies description — ironically even the practices considered ludicrous in the U.S. (such as canned laughter) and obsessively commercial (programs entirely advertiser-sponsored and produced) have now been introduced in these unfortunate lands. Though rather obvious today and often lacking skills in its propaganda, there is no knowing how soon commercial TV in these lands will get beyond repair.

Setting up USIS *Voice of America* stations beamed at foreign countries is undoubtedly justifiable in the ongoing propaganda war between the two Superpowers. For that reason, therefore, the enormous transmitting station set up in Sri Lanka and the one now beamed at Cuba (though selecting the name "Radio Marti" for the latter, using as it does a Cuban hero's name, is questionable) are entirely legitimate even if Cuba considers it highly provocative, and its citizens reportedly find it boring.

The U.S. government role in aiding the new commercial TV cable network "Coroner" in Luxemburg, however, is quite another story. Reportedly financed by Solamon Brothers, the mighty Wall Street Stockbrokers, with access to Beta Films, Germany, who have rights to most American movies, the intent is clearly to blanket Europe in a way not dissimilar to the methods used many years ago to force the British to accept commercial radio and TV. It worked then and whether it works now with those European countries that still have not gone commercial (or to force more American-style commercialism) remains to be seen. France has just succumbed to the commercial TV pressure.

British media practices (TV in particular) are now generally an extension of the three American networks. In the past few years, the most telling impact of this influence has been the virtual extinction of the traditional British concept of fairplay in political reporting and in sports. Wimbledon tennis commentaries on British media (TV or print) are so heavily skewed that they are often more pro-American than American media itself. And winning is everything. By any means.

The recent soccer violence has been condemned by one and all. But looking at possible reasons for this barbarism, has British media's obsession with winning been considered as a contributing cause to it? Consider, for instance, the viewpoint of that great British institution, The Thunderer. At the World Cup Cricket in Australia in March 1985, when India beat Australia and Pakistan beat MCC, *The London Times*

(March 4, 1985) said it all in its report headlines: "Tournament Loses Attraction".

Something very precious in British heritage is dying, if it is not already dead. But clearly, too, there are not many mourners. Most are out there rooting for Great Britain to win, win, win, by any means. If not on its own, then at least on the coat-tails of the U.S.

There are, then, many and varied reasons why American commercial TV with its power worldwide, with more Big Business freedoms and tax breaks than ever, feels very good about Ronald Reagan and why some of its star news performers became so emotionally involved in his re-election campaign that they often dropped even the facade of impartiality.

(vi)

There have been times during the two hundred years of its history when the U. S. has handled the very difficult, agonizing problem of separation of Church and State with great sensitivity, faced as it has been by a constitutional requirement to do so.

At other times extreme passions and dogmas (which one might call fanaticism in others) have ruled. But it is safe to say that never has the grassroots evangelical fervor — which has surfaced intermittently through the years — been channeled to the support of one political entity as thoroughly and as efficiently as this powerful segment now has been to the support of the Op-Con politicians.

In Christendom, there are three major powers today. One is the papacy of course. The current Pope speaks well and often about the need for peace, against the arms race and injustice, the plight of the poor, as have all recent Popes. But his main political interest is clearly in the internal turmoil in Poland, even as he admonishes Catholic priests against political involvement in Latin America. Then there is the World Council of Churches, the organisation of 30 Protestant and Orthodox denominations, with over 400 million members. U. S. media has been strongly critical of this body in recent years, accusing it of being anti-American and pro-Soviet ("an ecclesiastical clone of the United Nations" charged *Time* in its August 22, 1983 issue).

And then there are the electronic evangelists. Bottomless funds enable the American electronic evangelical preachers (and now their satellites overseas) to blanket the nation's TV homes at all times of the day and night; their constituency now is formidable. The most celebrated and popular of these preachers, such as Jerry Falwell, have been ardent and tireless campaigners for Ronald Reagan. Richard Nixon also had their firm support. But no Op-Con politician has had it with as much fervor as Mr. Reagan.

There could be valid religious reasons for this support. For instance, the evangelical lobby has been strongly against abortion choice to women, for institutionalized school prayer, for tax exemption to parochial schools, against busing for racial adjustment, against the Equal Rights Amendment, and so on. Reagan has become a loud spokesman for them. Curiously the opposition to all this has not merely consisted of atheists or agnostics, or even those who are only nominally of any religious order, who may consider these evangelical objectives to be unconstitutional, as encroaching upon civil rights of women and the racial minorities. Many regular churchgoers, even members of the clergy have sided with this opposition and many of their objections. And among the leading politicians opposed to most of the evangelists' views are those politicians whose backgrounds and upbringing are immersed in



religion, whose Christian lifestyle has been unquestionable, men such as Senator George McGovern (who was the Democratic nominee for President in 1972), a minister's son; Jimmy Carter (whose religious depth was the one quality that his powerful enemies could not dare to question); former Vice President Walter Mondale and Senator Gary Hart (both Democratic aspirants for the Presidency in 1984), the former a minister's son, the latter a Divinity graduate.

To add to the complexities fervently support Big Business, freedom to let it prosper, and even more fervently oppose "waste in government" (a code phrase against social services) ardently support a powerful military and an aggressive attitude towards the communists.

Ronald Reagan and the Op-Cons stand for all that of course. But curiously there are some reservations placed by the Op-Cons and their evangelist leaders, (which they voiced most strongly during Carter's presidency), about the indiscriminate practice of ethics, as preached by Jesus. For instance Nixon, Reagan, Ford and Kissinger\* firmly denounced Carter for attempting to apply the Golden Rule in matters of State.

From the Op-Con viewpoint, therefore, it is not so much religious dogmas and rituals but rather Christian ethics that must be separated away from the State, and presumably left in the Church. The politician must be a dual personality, ethical in personal life (if he or she so chooses), but amoral at best in matters of State.

Colonial foreign policy, of course, was firmly based upon this rationale. But is that also how the American founders saw it? "I know but one code of morality for men, whether singly or collectively" was the succinct, unequivocal belief of that remarkable founder Thomas Jefferson. A clear, non-denomination rule, stating simply that as individuals or as a nation, we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us. If we look back through history with brutal honesty, is it not possible that if we had adhered strictly to this simple creed, we might have been far more prosperous in more ways than one, had far greater respect (in the real sense) everywhere in the world, in fact is it not possible that communism as we know it may never even have existed and thrived? And the insane arms race and nuclear build-up just a bad dream?

The reality today is markedly different from that Jeffersonian concept. The consensus of the politicians in power, the Op-Cons, believe in the separation of the Golden Rule from the affairs of State.

But then what of the political Reagan and other Op-Con leaders, who speak at political meetings, on TV, at Op-Con gatherings, and at evangelical meetings about God, Judeo-Christian heritage, Judeo-Christian ethics, Western Civilization and present-day America as the standard-bearer of Jesus? And about Reagan's references to the evil godless empire of the communists? The apparent contradiction can only be explained away if we assume either (i) that the evangelical Reagan speaking about the Russians or about any non-Christian nation in this vein is expressing what his speechwriters have written for amoral pragmatic reasons or (ii) to Reagan and his group, Religion and the Golden Rule are mutually exclusive.

At the 41st Annual Convention of National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida, March '83, Reagan spoke with great emotion against sinners. "There is sin and evil in the world" he said "And we are enjoined by Scriptures and the Lord Jesus to oppose it with all our might ... America has kept alight the torch of freedom ... Let us pray [for the evil Soviets] ... let us be aware that they are the focus

\* The evangelists are fiercely for Israel's God-given rights.



of evil in the modern world". He has spoken often about the Soviet "evil empire", that they lie and cheat, they cannot be trusted. As recently as the Republican Convention in 1984, there was a conference at which Reagan was highly emotional about the evils in the world and the need to return to the Bible.

Does he really believe that there are no inconsistencies between the speeches and the policies laid out for him? Or is it all part of that grand strategy, of politics devoid of the Golden Rule? Only his Maker and possibly Ronald Reagan know for sure. What we can review is whether the Reagan foreign policy has been in the best interest of the U.S. and of democracy.

The astronomical increase in military spendings was a direct result of the national hysteria created in the late '70s, when the Op-Con politicians, select Pentagon officials, media and above all, Ronald Reagan, frightened the American public into believing that the Russians had been arming themselves at a furious pace — Reagan in fact claimed that the Soviets were now ahead of us militarily.

Whether this hysteria was created out of a genuine belief in this or in order to boost defense spendings to benefit defense contractors and through them the national economy, is not germane here. The simple question needs to be asked again: if the Russians were really that strong — even superior to us — militarily, why have they not attacked us in all these past four years while we have been spending \$1,000,000,000,000 on the military? Are we not convinced that they are entirely evil, untrustworthy? *Then why have they been waiting?* To give us a sporting chance?

A weakminded attempt was made by a politician recently to answer this question posed by this writer. They have not launched an attack because they are afraid of world opinion, he said. There are many reasons why this response is inadequate. Is their conquest of the free world not more important to the Soviets than "world opinion"? And if much of the world is obliterated in such a war, why should that "world opinion" be a deterrent? Surely once the Soviets controlled the world they need not fear public opinion. Has not media told us often how the public in many Soviet satellites is against them, yet must be silent? And even if there is a part of the world whose opinion is important, have the Soviets not had the opportunities in just the past three years that could be considered justifiable provocation, such as the shelling of their embassy by the Israelis during their attacks on Beirut, the new Euro-missiles, the arrest of their citizens by the U.S. in its invasion of Grenada? Did the Soviets worry about world opinion when they invaded Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan?

What we have achieved, intentionally or accidentally, is a deeper entrenchment than ever before of the nation's economy into military spendings. No reliable statistics are currently available to keep up with the hectic military spendings, but we must by now have almost thirty percent of the work force, directly or indirectly, employed in the military program and industrial investment must be at least a similar percent. *That means that even a more rational administration of the future could not afford the luxury of reducing or rechanneling this mammoth military spending to other needs, without risking a temporary recession and therefore public condemnation.*

In the meanwhile, despite aggressive export promotion of arms and arms gifts to favorite nations, arms will continue to pile up. Aside from the fact that the pileup soon becomes economic waste, obsolete, often rusty, the nuclear waste pileup presents even greater problems of disposal. Most recently urgent requests were made for desertlands and remote farms in Nevada, Texas, Washington by the Federal government but the local officials angrily declined the nuclear waste dumping in their

States. This year a nuclear dumping ground was found in the Third World when Sudan agreed to the dumping in exchange for a payment of \$5 billion. Presumably, when the potential of poor countries willing to risk the safety of their children in return for such payment dies out, outer space may become, along with the oceans (which already are), the recipients of these treasures from our civilization.

The pileup of military hardware, the colossal economic waste naturally requires a suitable foreign policy, an *aggressive* policy which permits at least the occasional crisis in which some of it can be used, and thereby provide justification in the public eye for a "strong defense". The Reagan foreign policy attitude of course is ideally suited for such aims.

"We don't care if they like us or not, we are determined to be respected" said Reagan all through his campaign. It drew standing ovations so he said it often, with only slight variations. Respect, in the old *conservative* use of the word, is due to those of nobility of character, moral fibre, not through terror of indiscriminate use of force which vandals throughout history aroused. But to Reagan, his speechwriters and those who wildly applaud such a viewpoint "respect" means what the Wild West movies said it means: Respect The Man With The Gun. It is the ultimate irony that through expression of such beliefs, the Op-Con reveal not the elitist qualities their strategists try so hard to project around the trimmings of affluence but the *nouveau riche* qualities they try even harder to hide. But it gets votes.

Despite the enormous waste, the expenditure of over \$1 trillion dollars in four years on the military can and does arouse fear in others, and this has provided the backdrop for Reagan's diatribes directed at the Soviets and other foreign "they" whose "respect" his strategists see as essential to make the U.S. Number 1 again.

Most of Reagan's foreign policy adventures were entirely predictable before he took office, in much the same way as a story outline reveals what the movie would be like. Nevertheless, some of the excesses have been even harsher than one would have expected in such a short time. No doubt, Reagan's sustained personal popularity, far more than his most optimistic strategists would have hoped for, has been responsible for that. Consider the sequence.

Reagan has flayed the Soviet "evil empire" from the start. By 1983 the Cold War had become more chilled even than in the days of McCarthy hysteria. Reagan eased up on his rhetoric a little when European anti-nuclear rallies in the fall of 1981 drew unprecedented crowds, especially after his reference to "limited nuclear war" drew fury from Europeans who would be the front line of that "limited nuclear war". There were deeply committed idealists in the peace movement in Europe, but most of the millions who came to rallies against the new Euro-missiles were clearly more concerned about their own safety than any commitments against wars or nuclear proliferation. That self-interest provided the weak link that the Op-Con representatives in Europe were able to use very effectively. They talked of jobs through the new Euro-missiles to be installed, the safeguard of additional American bases against the Eastern Bloc. The opposition weakened. Thatcher of course was with Reagan all the way. In West Germany, Helmut Kohl won a surprising victory to become Chancellor in early '83, helped greatly by the switch of the "New Democrats" away from the Social Democrats to his Christian Democrats. Kohl had voiced himself entirely in support of Reagan. And "Socialist" Mitterrand of France, faced with growing unrest and economic pains at home (Yves Montand, the French actor, received enormous publicity in American media as a Ronald Reagan in the making) became a docile supporter too.



They all fell in line behind "Rawhide" Reagan, their leader in a confrontation with the Soviet Bloc, not unlike two Wild West gangs at high noon in Death Valley — only this time nuclear arsenals were the weapons, not six-shooters. To charge up the public, every conceivable anniversary of World War 2 victories (of the European theatre) were hyped into a great media event with all NATO stars in attendance, making emotional speeches.

It was the Russians who backed off from that High Noon confrontation, angrily ending the Geneva talks, threatening their own escalation, but in fact providing more testimony to the fact that they were too *weak* militarily to confront the West, even before it installed the new Euro-missiles which it proceeded to do in November '83.

In the meanwhile "Rawhide" Reagan had been shooting from the hip in other directions. War Games were conducted in all parts of the world, at the border of the Iron Curtain in Europe (while the Warsaw bloc conducted its own on the other side), in the Far East, frequently in Latin America. Ronald Reagan has set new records of excesses in Latin America which even his severest critics would not have believed possible.

The Monroe Doctrine has been evoked many times by the U.S. in the past, especially since the Monopolists commenced to rule Washington towards the end of the last century, and in ways that James Monroe might never have dreamt possible. At least thirty military incursions have been carried out over the years into Latin America "to protect U.S. lives and property" and "to protect U.S. interests". Nicaragua has been attacked at least five times in the past, in 1909 to help overthrow President Zelaya, then to occupy the country from 1912-1925, establishing thereafter the Somoza (father and sons) regime, which was eventually overthrown in the 1979 revolution. During the anti-Vietnam War era, when some former CIA agents revealed their role in creating unrest in Latin America in a variety of roles and especially following the revelations of the coup against Chile's elected President Allende during the Nixon-Kissinger regime, public sentiment — and major media — had voiced strong condemnation of the past excesses. As we have seen, the Carter years saw a sharp reversal of these policies towards Latin America.

Mr. Reagan has not only reversed the Carter policy in Latin America, but has set new records in flouting international laws with his policies. Carter had ordered aid stopped to countries known to be guilty of human rights violations consistently. Reagan quickly lifted such controls on aid to Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay (Pinochet of Chile, when faced with public demonstrations against his dictatorship, simply declares Martial Law and orders the military to mow down the demonstrators, even now). On the other hand, the Reaganites have arm-twisted international lending institutions, like the Inter-American Development Bank even to withhold agricultural loans which Nicaragua desperately needs now for feeding its people. In the more direct strategies to bring down the current elected government of Nicaragua (Reagan has now openly admitted that this is the aim), CIA, U.S. military "advisers" and plenty of U.S. arms and monetary help have been devoted to training Nicaraguan rebels, to sabotage and conduct guerilla warfare after their training. The Reagan administration has conducted War Games in the harbor of Nicaragua, then even mined that harbor, without being officially at War. Nicaragua has appealed to the U.N. often, but the U.N. is powerless in view of the U.S. veto power. After the mining, Nicaragua filed a suit at the World Court (The International Court of Justice). The Reagan administration merely announced it would not be bound by any World Court decision. Even NATO allies have been publicly critical of the U.S.



policy in Latin America, and were particularly critical about the cavalier refusal to abide by World Court decisions.

The Nicaraguan insurgents (or mercenaries) with no base in Nicaragua, have grown in numbers and become more efficient after this training under the CIA and U.S. military "advisers" (a CIA manual, teaching some of the most macabre ways to undermine a government, specially written now for Latin America, leaked out in 1983). Operating from the bases across the border from Nicaragua, in Costa Rico and Honduras (both have dictatorships friendly to the Reagan government) many of them reportedly graduates from "training centers" that function freely in the U.S. to teach military manoeuvres and terrorism, they strike consistently inside Nicaragua's border villages. When bitter oposition in Congress from liberals forced the money supply to dry up (at least temporarily), the Reaganites announced that private "donations" were being used. The "freedom fighters" have, after being let loose inside Nicaragua, successfully disrupted the society, blowing up bridges, trains, bombing crowded areas and in guerilla battles with the Nicaraguan soldiers. Nicaragua claims it has been forced to increase its spendings on its military supplies as a result of these insurrections, and in view of the impending U.S. invasion, which, it is convinced, is being planned if the mercenaries cannot overthrow the government. For a while, after its revolution in 1979, the Nicaraguan plan for education and farming was considered a model for other developing countries. Now it is all in ruins. Nicaragua feels it will be attacked by the U.S. and of course defeated (its population is less than 3 million). But the people claim to be determined to fight the U.S. invasion to the last man and woman.

Unlike the Iranians, the Nicaraguans were never militant towards the U.S. In fact, they sought friendship even after Reagan took over. They have categorically and frequently denied providing any help to the opposition in El Salvador, deny the presence of any Cuban or Soviet forces in their country. Then they offered a pact at the Manzanillo negotiations, to even allow U.S. military bases at their borders (just as the U.S. has military bases at Guantanamo, at Cuba's border) provided the U.S. stopped attempting to interfere in Nicaragua's internal affairs by trying to overthrow its government. The Reagan administration rejected all that.

Mr. Reagan announced early in his regime that he saw Nicaragua as the villain in Latin America, a "Marxist" government, tied to Cuba, encouraging insurgencies elsewhere, and a great threat to its Latin neighbors. Mexico and Panama have just as clearly announced that they do not share Mr. Reagan's great concern about Nicaragua. In fact, like Nicaragua, Mexico (even some European countries like France) had recognized the legitimacy of the El Salvadorian "leftist rebels" as representing the vast majority of the people, against a particularly brutal right-wing regime. International press, and U.S. media, had repeatedly reported the brutal excesses of Major D'Aubuisson's regime, and its military. After Mr. Reagan's election, the Salvadorian military had frequently gone on a rampage, apparently convinced that the Reagan administration would never take them to task or stop the free flow of extensive aid (including military aid) that Mr. Reagan channeled to El Salvador's dictatorship after taking office. Frequently, dissenters were mowed down in public; often young dissenters were taken for questioning, and their mangled bodies left in public places as a warning. Literally thousands had been killed by the military and the police. The Catholic Church in El Salvador (as in other Central American countries) had been very supportive of the people's movements against harsh right-wing dictatorship. Many priests came in for attack in El Salvador. Archbishop Romero of El Salvador

was killed by the "death squads", because of his opposition to the regime. Bombs were thrown at churches.

American public reaction — at least among those aware of the facts — was often warm. Several Americans had gone to be of aid to the people in this reign of terror. Some were killed. Then four American women — three of them nuns — had gone to El Salvador, were all raped and killed; there were witnesses who even knew where their bodies were dumped by the military. Despite a furore in the U.S., the guilty men were not brought to trial. It was the bad publicity of such brutality that no doubt forced the Reagan administration to realize that its ties with d'Aubuisson had to cease. In the American-supervised elections in El Salvador, a "moderate", Duarte, was elected. Duarte did finally bring the military men guilty of the rape and murder of the three nuns and their friends to trial. But he claims that he has little control over the military. And according to the latest press reports, killings continue at the rate of 35-40 a month. Salvadorians who escape to the U.S. and are provided shelter by sympathetic Americans, are ordered back to El Salvador by the Reagan administration, refused political asylum.

The new Pope's directive to Latin American Catholic priests not to be involved in politics has been a tremendous blow to the people's movements everywhere in Latin America (which is predominantly Catholic). Some priests (such as the priests who held Cabinet positions in Nicaragua's "Marxist" government) have been severely castigated by the Pope. The presence of the priests in the people's movements made Reagan's charges that these oppositions were entirely "communist inspired" wholly ludicrous.

The Contadora countries — Mexico, Panama, Columbia, Venezuela — have tried hard to control the growing violence in Latin America and to prevail upon the U.S. not to resort to military provocations. They had even arranged for a peace agreement between the El Salvador opposition and its new government, and between El Salvador and Nicaragua. Nicaragua accepted the Contadora agreement. The U.S. government felt El Salvador should not accept the agreement. And it did not. The Contadora agreement would have required that all foreign military involvement, foreign bases and foreign military aid be discontinued and each Central American country should agree to strict supervision for any violations. If, therefore, the Reagan government's real objection was that Nicaragua has Soviet and Cuban military presence and aid and is itself attempting to aid El Salvador's opposition rebels with it, why did Reagan refuse the Contadora peace proposals?

At a visit to the U.S. in August 1983, (even before the more recent moves by the U.S. against Nicaragua), Mexico's President De La Madrid had been terse and frank in his criticism. "Conservative dictatorships are the major manufacturers of domestic violence, revolutions and insurrections" he said, and warned against the U.S. "show of force which threatens to touch off a conflagration... we believe people should be able to determine their own solutions and that is why we are responding to calls for help from certain of our Latin American brothers". Nicaragua was one, of course. Mexico's Foreign Minister was explicit about their other concerns. "We do not want a crisis in Central America that could become similar to the one that has continued for 40 years in the Middle East" (*Time*, June 2, 1983).

Now, following up on the mining of its harbors and the stated objective to overthrow the government of Nicaragua, the Reagan administration has placed an embargo on all trade with Nicaragua. The Nicaraguan economy is in shambles, Its President Ortego recently flew to Russia for help. Incensed by this, the U.S. Congress



has now sanctioned (June, 1985) more military aid to the Nicaraguan "freedom fighters".

It is increasingly likely that the U.S. will eventually invade Nicaragua, but it is unlikely that all its citizens will fight to the last man and woman. Should that invasion come about, however, and the Nicaraguan government is overthrown, out of those Nicaraguans who come out alive, there will be a new band of committed terrorists whom the world will have to face in the future. And we will wonder why terrorism thrives ...

In comparison, Libya has, so far, got away with merely a flesh wound, despite public hysteria of an unusual kind. In addition to all the excesses which media reports regularly about Libya and Ghaddafi, an unusual news item grabbed the headline in 1982 for over two weeks. A hit-team had been put together by Ghaddafi, said media, and was being sent to assassinate President Reagan. The news caught on like wildfire, made daily headlines, hour by hour, with progress reports on the movements on the hit-team, its composition by nationality and its location. There was considerable public terror as news bulletins said the hit-team had now reached Mexico. Presumably, the hit-team was travelling with an efficient PR agent who issued press releases periodically; clearly, also, its travel agent was far from efficient if he had landed them in Mexico on their way from Libya to Washington.

As strangely as it had begun, the news story died there. We heard nothing about the hit-team again. But public anger was fully aroused, and so when Mr. Reagan ordered War Games to be conducted a stone's throw from the Libyan shores, concurrently advising all Americans to leave Libya (contrary to general belief, there were many Americans who worked in Libya), the public was firmly behind Mr. Reagan.

Ghaddafi screamed to the U.N. that the whole hit-team story was fake, intended merely to allow this harassment and possible invasion. He added a few uncomplimentary remarks about Mr. Reagan. Nothing came of it all, and while Ghaddafi continued with his denunciations for a while, the American public was no doubt satisfied that "respect" had been extracted from Libya.

And then there has been that ongoing tragic hell, which just a decade earlier had been an earthly heaven: Lebanon. In June, 1982, Israel with reported tacit signals from U.S. again invaded Lebanon (presumably the eastern front of Reagan's "respect" policy). There was the typical indiscriminate bombing, the mass killing, the massive destruction of Beirut's remaining edifices. Then the holocaust, the mass murder of incalculable Palestinian men, women and children. They had been rounded up at Shatila and Sabra, then systematically executed with deliberate precision by the Israel's Maronite Christian allies in Lebanon. Israel's hand in the holocaust plan was reported even by U.S. media. World press denounced the atrocities and for perhaps the first time, major U.S. media was also openly critical of Israel. Within Israel too, there was shock and indignation at the atrocities. The Reaganites were critical as well. To soothe international anger (the first time Israel has been so universally criticized), Israel announced that it did not intend to stay in Lebanon. But it did, for two years, during which time it had frequent clashes with the U.N. peacemaking forces when the latter were not willing to obey Israeli orders. Soon, the Southern Lebanon Shiites (many of them had reportedly actually applauded the Israeli occupation initially hoping that it would somehow end the ongoing killings) now became militant against Israel and it was their suicide missions which caused many Israeli casualties and eventually led to phased Israeli withdrawal.

But, in the meanwhile, amidst considerable media fanfare, Reagan had stepped



in, sending American troops to Lebanon, and American diplomats to arrange peace. In line with Kissinger's diplomacy which led to Sadat's separate peace treaty with Israel, the Americans concentrated on getting Lebanon's President Gemayel to agree to a peace treaty with Israel. Israel, said the U.S. diplomats, would only withdraw with such a peace treaty and if Syrian forces also left Lebanon at the same time. Gemayel (who had been the leader of the Phalangists, with deep ties to Israel) first agreed, then refused to sign such a separate treaty, and also refused to link Syrian withdrawal to that of Israel. Already furious with the presence of U.S. troops who they saw as aiding Israel, and with American vetoes when the U.N. troops attempted to condemn Israeli invasions, this latest attempt to serve Israeli objectives resulted in blind rage against the U.S. from the militants. Suicide missions commenced; in the worst of them, the U.S. Embassy was demolished with many casualties.

The Democratic opposition in the U.S. had become highly critical of Reagan's decision to send the U.S. Marines and gun boats to Lebanon. They demanded an end to American involvement. Reagan refused. Instead the U.S. retaliated against the Lebanese extremists with its own massive bombing of Beirut on December 5, 1983 but it got no respect from the Lebanese, who by now probably did not even know if someone new was doing the bombing. It did however get respect from a commentator on Israeli Defense Force Radio who said (as reported by *New York Times*, December 5) that this U.S. bombing was the result of "strategic co-operation" between the U.S. and Israel and "the first expression of the spirit of understanding [between U.S. and Israel] concluded last week".\*

On February 3, 1984, Reagan flatly and angrily told *The Wall Street Journal* that the U.S. would never "cut and run" from Lebanon. But on February 23, at a press conference he announced that the U.S. forces in Lebanon were being withdrawn, 17 months after they had been sent there. Asked why the sudden change, Reagan said "No one has still found a foolproof defense against these surprise attacks particularly when the attackers are willing to give their own lives".

Rawhide Reagan had run into a serious problem in foreign policy. How does one draw Respect For The Gun from those who are not afraid of dying? He did order extensive shelling of Beirut as the American forces withdrew. Israel, also faced with considerable public indignation at home for the periodic deaths of the Israeli soldiers, now ordered a phased withdrawal, but with what the new Israeli Premier Peres called the "Iron Fist" policy. This consisted of burning and indiscriminate killing in Southern Lebanese villages as they withdrew, and picking up between 700 to 800 Lebanese to take with them to ensure good behavior of the rest (the Lebanese called that hostage-taking). The Lebanese Government appealed to the U.N., the U.N. cried that it was illegal to kill and take hostages from one country to another, but in the face of U.S. vetoes, was entirely helpless to do anything.

Mr. Reagan's "macho" image was a little tarnished at his inability to do much about the "suicide missions" in Lebanon that periodically killed Americans and destroyed American property. But the image was not entirely tarnished. Four days after one such suicide attack on October 23, '83, the U.S. invaded the Caribbean island of Grenada. What you lose on the swings, you gain on the roundabouts.

Grenada had irked the Reaganites for quite a while. It had a Socialist government

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\* Reagan has been very popular with Israel from the start because he is the first President to claim that Israeli settlements in the West Bank are not illegal.

and it had Cuban and Soviet aid. Mr. Reagan itched to clean it up. A few months before the invasion, Mr. Reagan appeared on TV with aerial photographs, dramatically pointing to these as proof that while the Grenadian government claimed it was extending its runway at the airport to improve tourist traffic, it was in fact a Soviet missile launching project that was being built.

Mr. Reagan then launched the massive surprise invasion of Grenada on October 27, the largest U.S. military action since the Vietnam War. Many in media were quite upset because they were kept entirely in the dark (except for those really close to Op-Con leaders) and not allowed even to be present on this historic occasion which was to make Grenada safe for Democracy. It was soon clear, however, why media had been excluded. Some upstarts in media would have made much of the fact (as they later did) that when the formidable U.S. forces (ably assisted by three other island forces) swooped down in their bombing on the sleepy island, there was no resistance, only mass panic. Minimum bombing and shelling was necessary to capture the inhabitants, the government and the Cuban and Soviet workers. The major casualty in the bombing was a lunatic asylum where many inmates were killed and injured. The Cuban and Soviet workers were arrested, then shipped off, a new Democratic government was installed (it voiced its deep gratitude for the rescue mission), American aid soon began to flow in, instead of Cuban and Soviet aid; the people said they were very happy. Then the Reagan administration announced that the U.S. was helping Grenada *extend the runway at its airport to help in increasing tourist traffic*. Polls taken showed that Mr. Reagan's popularity had been further boosted by the successful invasion of Grenada.

There are those against whom The Stick is not necessary to use, according to Mr. Reagan. They are so civilized that only gentle diplomatic suggestions are necessary and they will come around, in another year, or perhaps ten years or so. Take South Africa, for instance, a good friend of Israel, flourishing economically, with large investments and trade with the U.S. under Reagan. South Africa can invade neighboring countries and kill dissidents at will. It can deny Nambibia the right to its own government too, even though the U.N. granted that right years ago. Pressures within the U.S. are currently building to force the U.S. government to use its considerable power, (to pull out its investments and trade for instance). Mr. Reagan does not agree to such harsh methods. "Quiet Diplomacy" he says, will do the trick.

Other parts of Africa have not escaped the Stick, but of a different kind. Ever since it became known that Kissinger had advised Nixon to let the Biafran people starve as a political manoeuvre in the Superpower chess game, it has become, apparently, an acceptable practice to delay food aid to countries even after famine has set in, if those countries are under the suzerainty of the other Superpower. The current recipients of this sophisticated gameplay have been millions of Ethiopians, then the Sudanese, with more in the offing. Once the people of the world come to know of the starving millions who are dying, of course, they act, as the British, the American people and others (the Scandinavians, as always) have done. But then, the other Superpower makes its move. According to reports, the Soviets have delayed the distribution of these supplies and corrupt and inefficient officials have done their share. And all the while, those millions who are dead and dying need not have, if the early screams had been heard and attended. There will be more screams from millions of children everywhere in the Third World for another reason. Angry with UNESCO, the U.S. has taken its marbles and left in 1984, taking with it, its 25% contribution in expenses. Dutifully, Britain follows suit in 1985.



During Mr. Reagan's presidency, terrorism against the U.S. has increased, That should surprise no one. Terrorism is stupid, self-defeating and cruel to innocent people. Of course such lawlessness must be put down with a firm hand. That is pure commonsense. But then, let us consider a highly unpopular viewpoint. Should all terrorist acts be lumped together in our simpleminded definition, and treated alike, regardless of the cause of the disease? Can a government conduct a terrorist act? We certainly did condemn (to put it mildly) the Iranian government's involvement in holding the hostages, if not in the actual seizure. But then, what of the Israeli's most recent "Iron Fist" campaign in Lebanon, indiscriminately burning and killing, then taking those 700-800 Southern Lebanese with them?

Acts of terrorism, whether those of disrupting normal life, blowing up bridges or buildings, terrorizing people into chaos in order to overthrow a government, have been practiced by "rightists" and "leftists" for years. Even blowing up planes with passengers aboard goes back to the '50s; there was that famous 1955 explosion that blew up the Air India flight taking dignitaries to the Bandung Conference (the precursor to the Non-Aligned Movement) in which China's Chou En-Lai was to travel but accidentally did not. Dark charges were made then by the World Press about who was involved, even by a few American newspapers.

We could say, in this Op-Con era of ignoring the Golden Rule in matters of State, that we do not care what double standards are involved, as the most powerful nation on earth (No. 1), we will not allow ourselves to be victimized by any form of terrorism, no matter what. Certainly the people — most voters — applaud that. We could put that into practice and attempt to frighten countries in which the terrorists operate by indiscriminate bombing and killing. But has it worked for Israel in these past years? It could be said that so much havoc has been wrought, so many millions killed, wounded, made homeless, that sympathy for the Palestinians has died among many people, that even some of the PLO and other Arabs have become weaker and more amenable. This may be true. But is the U.S. truly ready, even in this extremist pragmatic Op-Con era, to risk world opinion today, and what history books may say in the future about us, as the standard bearers of democracy? Have we entirely forgotten that democracy means rejection of superiority by the accident of birth, and therefore, by democratic standards, people everywhere, whether their country is No. 1, No. 52 or No. 151, have and should have the same rights under law, national and international?

In fact, while Israeli tactics may have worked in some ways (at great cost to its economy, in lives of its armed forces and in fear that its people must always feel), it has led to the ultimate extremism among some of the PLO and now some of the Lebanese: suicide attacks, the willingness to die if one can take some of the enemy along. Purely from the tactical standpoint, this presents problems to which there are no easy solution, as Rawhide Reagan has admitted himself.

If we truly wish to end the terrorist epidemic, we need to realise that the callous strategy of deliberately focusing on the terrorist act and refusing to look at its causes, must end. Just causes do not die away. The human spirit has a way of clinging to a just cause, despite all the suffering, all the killings. We need to recognize that each time we threaten or use force, when media distorts the truth, when politicians indulge in name-calling, we are merely inflaming the situation for the future. No doubt many of these suicide terrorists are mentally disturbed, others coaxed into martyrdom, no doubt some are in it for the kicks, the glamor. But when a sixteen year old Lebanese girl of good background and education, with no previous ties to any terrorists, elects



to tie herself to explosives in order to die because pain is no longer bearable, and in that act to take some of those she sees as the cause of her tragedies, the Americans, it is not a "brainwashed psycho" as some in media might label it, but the final statement that must be understood for all our sakes. If we cannot, it may be because *we* are brainwashed.

In the case of Palestinians, we cannot forget that they tried to be heard until 1970, when they started their terrorist attacks. No doubt even among them, there are the psychotics, the thrill seekers. But there are also those who feel we can only respect the law of the jungle, because their very existence was forgotten until they resorted to violence. It is easy enough to condemn. It takes real strength for a Superpower to be restrained and willing to look again at past mistakes, to correct them. Calling these terrorists "barbarians" and "bums" and "thugs" and threatening violent retributions against those willing to die for their cause might win votes, but it only encourages more terrorism, because its practitioners see their confrontation with monumental power, flexing its muscles with threats, in the David-Goliath context, the Goliath who is afraid to die, the David who is not. It is this that has provided an aura of glamor, of vague sympathy towards terrorists from many people.

What is even worse, such policies give all terrorism a vague halo of righteousness in the eyes of many people *and others take to terrorism even if their cause is frivolous, hoping also to be shrouded in that aura.* The current Sikh terrorism constantly in the headlines, is a case in point. It represents merely a cause dreamed up by a few, encouraged by extraordinary publicity, *favorable* publicity by Western media. Why have U.S. officials been so willing to give the Khalistan issue so much time when they were never willing to hear the PLO for so many years and will now mainly hear the terrorists during the media event of terrorism?

Reportedly many in India are convinced that Indira Gandhi's murder was arranged by the CIA, basing this on (a) records of other misdeeds and on the fact that (b) some of the Sikh terrorists were known to have been trained at terrorist camps within the U.S., which are allowed to operate freely and "legally" even as Mr. Reagan denounces terrorism, and (c) on *The Washington Post* report stating that the 80 Lebanese killed recently by a terrorist bomb were CIA surrogates, following Mr. Reagan's new policy of fighting terrorism with terrorism. Whether the CIA has been involved in these instances is not germane to the issue here; even without that direct involvement, we are guilty of double standards in Lebanon itself, in condemning one form of terrorism and condoning another, even supporting it as we have the Israeli excesses.

It is impossible to believe that eminent minds who formulate U.S. strategies do not realize that the many dissensions and separatist movements in the Third World have their roots in a deep-seated inferiority complex, great pain and suffering from socio-economic conditions, the poverty, illiteracy of recent centuries, which have resulted in bruised egos seeking recognition within *narrower* definitions of religious and ethnic sub-groups within which these bruised egos could hope for personal recognition. This, and not religion or ethnicity has a lot to do (perhaps with a little help from the outside) with the continuing sub-group hates and separatist movements in places like India, in the "religious" hate between Sunnis and Shias, and in the labelling "Christian", "Muslim", "Druze" hostilities which media plays up so often, in Lebanon. The best evidence in support of this theory is the extremely close ties between Christians and Jews in the Western World today. Once such bitter enemies, with religious differences so basic as to seem irreconcilable, with affluence, education

and — most of all — a milieu in which each could feel pride not shame through ridicule in their own faith, they are, at least for pragmatic reasons, entirely united.

Today, of course, even media is confused about what labels to apply in Lebanon. Groups that are friends one day are killing each other the next. Even President Gemayel who was once the leader of the Phalenge extremists, appears now to have pulled himself away from them with good sense, so he is now the target of that group.

It all has little or nothing to do with religion anymore (even if it once did) or even with rational sub-group identities in Lebanon. Death and pain and injustices have numbed everything, Israeli invasions and devastations wrought upon Lebanon for so long, have a lot to do with that. But the seeds were sown by that mischievous constitution drawn up when Lebanon was allowed independence in 1943, a "democratic" constitution that required Christian Maronites must always be President and hold top Military ranks, a Sunni Muslim must be Prime Minister. It invited animosities and alliances based on religious affiliations. Even so, the Lebanese might have resolved it amongst themselves, had it not been for the 1958 imposed solution by the U.S., the forced exodus of the Palestinians from Jordan to Lebanon in 1970 and the Israeli invasions that have followed and seem to be never-ending.

It is an odd coincidence that after a similar arbitrary division of North and South Vietnam and the horrors inflicted upon that unhappy land in the many years of the American war, the Vietnamese, once so gentle and tranquil, become mass killers. Lebanon, one of the oldest civilizations, of happy, fun-loving people, seems now to have reached the stage where killing is a way of life.

In foreign policy and in dealing with terrorism, that bastard offspring of unjust foreign policy, the Op-Cons must realize that colonialism is dead. No amount of wishful thinking, military might, machiavellian planning, media chicanery and brainwash, will bring it back to life. These tactics, highly skilled though they are, can brainwash the American public and a few people elsewhere, but no more than that. Britain learned that. But that was now a generation ago. Today, under Thatcher, some of the former proletariat masses, now part of the burgeoning middle class, no doubt thirst for a renewal of those past glories that they never tasted; they may as a result be ardent Op-Con supporters, in much the same way that many Americans are. But in their own true interests, both the U.S. and Britain leadership should reach back to teach one another better qualities from their pasts. It was Franklin Roosevelt who played such an important part in pressing Britain to give up on colonialism. It is Britain now who could teach America much of what is best in British heritage, not the worst of its past errors.

In an era when fervent evangelists proclaim the message of the Bible, and politicians claim the U.S. is the standard-bearer for Jesus, deep down within, can anyone truly doubt that if Jesus were around today, he would be among those masses of suffering humanity in Central America, in Asia and Africa? Or that, unless He quickly worked those unique miracles of His, He would have all the secret services of the world after Him for being a "dangerous radical leftist"?

(vii)

Even in broad strokes, it is rash to predict history on the run, especially in these mercurial times. The Op-Cons have held real power in the U.S. for many years and it is now most likely that they will continue also to hold the reins of government for the foreseeable future.



A terrible war, the loss of many American lives, would cause a major switch in public opinion; a major economic crisis could also do it. But such a change in opinion would be transitory, not one of values. The Op-Con strategists are of course fully aware of the dangers, and would prefer to avert even that limited reversal. And so extreme care will be taken to avoid such a major catastrophe, even as they play with fire. They will, from time to time, also attempt to stifle criticism by making some liberal moves. Not too much of course will be given away, but major media could always be relied upon to sugarcoat and exaggerate the droppings, as in the revised Tax Plan.

But while such concessions may become politically expedient, they will be very few and far between. The current opportunity for the Op-Cons is much too good to last indefinitely but most will be made of it to widen the gap between the very rich and the rest, knowing that any future attempts to bridge that widening gap will be more difficult than ever before. The ultimate aim is to establish a class distinction. Already the term "new aristocracy," is being freely used.

Very Big Business has been reinforced in the U.S. with foreign investments especially from Europe — which provides it even more clout. In recent years, as stated in the Enbar piece in *Fortune* magazine, May 1978 (referred to earlier), European financial wizards have recognized that Capitalism (used in that euphemistic sense to include all its excesses) may be nearing its end in Europe but could have up to twenty five more years in the U.S.. More foreign investments are now pouring in, also because of the high interest rates and the unnaturally high dollar, the epidemic of mergers between Big Business empires. Concentration of power in hands even fewer than before makes control of economic trends that much more feasible, to create optimistic trends when the political situation requires it, and economic doldrums to punish would-be reform administrations.

Real reformers, with real moral integrity, may well be an endangered species, now and in the future. In the current milieu, serious challenge by the opposition may only be possible with a candidate of charisma with a similar image as Reagan; for instance, a Paul Newman, whose movie credits far exceed those of Reagan and who is clearly more intelligent and humane as well. The future is bleak, however, for real reform. The Carter example will loom larger than life to deter moral candidacy, the Reagan shoot-from-the-hip popularity will draw imitators galore.

An imminent nuclear holocaust, an economic catastrophe, another of the Have-Not uprising as in the 1960s, would certainly cause panic and temporary "liberal" leanings in media and public attitudes, but only until the panic were over. At all other times, pocket-book issues and status will be at the forefront of public concerns, unless media dictates otherwise. The Op-Con campaign with Reagan as spokesman has made pragmatism synonymous with holiness. It does not require the public to change; just fortify its existing attitudes with powerful rationales.

Even Jimmy Carter's election was possible because the national mood was still — but only just — at the receding ebb of the shocks from the Vietnam War and Watergate. Also, he was not viewed as a liberal, but a pragmatic, southern, Baptist centralist. And it cannot be overlooked that while the Op-Cons may have crushed his moral leanings, the Have-nots unconsciously aided his removal, first in the demands they made for quick redress and then by denouncing him, as some did, for not doing enough. It is a syndrome that has occurred before, most recently in 1968.

Of course, it is easy to criticize such demands for redress, for justice long denied;



perhaps one is insensitive to not understand fully the pressures that build up behind such sub-group leaders, the need for demanding unrealistic speed for tactical reasons. But have the consequences justified such tactics?

There has been great waste in government. There have been severe abuses in Social Services, which have grown since the emotional guilt of the turbulent '60s and which were allowed to germinate throughout the Nixon-Ford presidencies. Even as Carter commenced with the task of cutting the waste out, there were demands for redress from the Have-nots. Real redress is what they wanted, as they made clear, not more waste. The two were and are distinct from each other. But to the public, through media and the campaigning Op-Cons, it came across as the same. Ironically, even as Abernathy endorsed Reagan, Reagan was drawing applause for denouncing waste in Social Services and "handouts", code words for which the Reagan supporters needed no decoders.

The tendency to demand more from a liberal President is not restricted to domestic groups. Third World countries have been apt to do so, as well, not only in the substance of their claims (undoubtedly reasonable and long overdue) but in the rhetoric that accompanies such claims. The obvious example is Iran. Most serious observers would agree that, contrary to popular, Op-Con and media-generated contentions, the Iranian revolution could not have been stopped by Reagan. If anything, direct U.S. interference would have led to more bloodshed, probably even a War between the Superpowers (Russia at the time was much closer to the revolutionaries and could have waved the 1919 defense treaty with Iran as justification). Certainly, Reagan's current fiasco in Lebanon (despite more strong-arm tactics he will undoubtedly pursue to reinforce his macho image) should have convinced even the sceptics. But the ongoing rhetoric and provocative comments of the Iranian revolutionaries, even some of their elected officials, would undoubtedly have been more moderate with Reagan in power — and it was this that media played up so much, arousing American public anger as much if not more than the actual hostage-taking.

But Iran was not the only one. Others in their approach to the U.S. had been more demanding under Carter, used stronger rhetoric oblivious to their own long-term interest; U.S. media has played up such comments, with predictable public ire, thoroughly used of course by Op-Con politicians. It is human nature, the urgency of the redress sought by the exploited is acute, and they place far greater hope for humane and just consideration from the liberal and are, therefore, more disappointed when not enough is done. It is all understandable. But it is also self-defeating. Unfortunately, until the complexities of American politics are better understood, the syndrome will persist. The Op-Cons will continue to show the liberals as weak, indulgent, who invite turmoil and lack of "respect"; they will continue to characterize liberal policies as "giveaways" at home and abroad, and score heavily with the voters.

There are other reasons why the Op-Cons will continue to dominate. An important one is the greater skill and efficiency of their image campaigns, in electioneering and in office, the image of the best qualified, the elite, the disciplined. The Op-Cons have no abstract ideology, no idealism, mainly greed and self-interest as their unifying code. Now, with the stakes higher than ever before, the need to sustain the enormous gains in popularity, rivalry between segments of the Power Cartel and between political candidates can be kept to the minimum. The critical need is to hold power, to maintain *status quo*. The Op-Con politicians will be made to recognize the

importance of unity; even when rivalry exists, it will be aimed to provide more positive propaganda for common interests, not for one segment of the Cartel over another. The Op-Cons will have it all — limitless funds, unity, the ability to buy the best brains among strategists, image-makers, and for all the big and little tasks that become necessary in politics. Against that will be the Opposition, emotional, often divided, with jealous sub-groups, disorganized, struggling to communicate ideology through poorly planned efforts via a hostile media to a voting public, who are bored with specifics and would much rather be watching a soap opera.

Because Op-Con values are, in a sense, foreign to European heritage, there is some back-sliding there away from these values and Op-Con political supremacy. If there is a political change in Britain, for instance, there will be some reflection, some influence, as always, upon the American public. But in Britain, Op-Con has taken hold much deeper and wider than elsewhere in Europe. British media itself will be a formidable enemy to those who may attempt to reverse the Op-Con trend. Currently, even Sweden, that most civilised nation, is close to danger of Op-Con domination. Greece's Popandreou has cleverly averted the full impact of the Op-Con propaganda onslaught against him, by calling elections earlier, before that propaganda could do much damage.

Real change in the U.S. requires genuine value changes. And before these changes can be absorbed and can flourish, major changes are essential in institutions, in lacerating the monopolistic hold of commercial TV from its control on the public mind, even before any other major reform can be implemented. Instead, today, even countries which had withstood the power of commercial TV monopoly are now succumbing to the disease, and U.S. commercial TV is spreading its influence wider and deeper than ever.

Nonetheless, the Op-Cons will have to walk a very fine line, taxing their machiavellian strategists to the fullest. Current policy requirements could lead to War; but even if they do not, the threat of War will always hang like Democles' sword. For the Op-Cons, this would not be entirely unsatisfactory. Such a tense state would justify the military expenditures. And such fears would keep the public from thinking about their own personal gripes, even provide commercial TV with another rationale for propagating extreme chauvinism, and with it, the balm of living in borrowed glory of the fabulous wealth of very rich Americans and the Big Business empires.

It was in this sense, after all, that Dr. Samuel Johnson referred to patriotism as "the last resort of the Scoundrel", and Bertrand Russell said "Patriotism is the chief curse of our age and will bring civilization to an end if it cannot be mitigated."

*Déjà Vu*

In reviewing our times, our two hundred years — no more than a blink of an eye in human history — how will honest historians see us, assuming that we allow the human species to survive? How will they judge Democracy?

“We have destroyed an aristocratic society, and settling down complacently among the ruins of the old building, we seem to want to stay like that forever” wrote Alex de Tocqueville, famed scholar and historian (later French Foreign Minister) in his voluminous treatise *Democracy in America* after his extensive travels in the U.S. in 1831-32 (*Democracy In America* trans. by George Lawrence, Doubleday, 1966). “In order to profit of past experience, a democracy must already have a certain degree of civilization and enlightenment.”

How would de Tocqueville see us now? The United States has chalked up some astounding milestones, become the richest, the most powerful, the leader of the Western world. Freedom and zeal to use that freedom certainly played a role. Could we have done it if the land we acquired was not oozing with nature’s treasures? Could we have attracted the best talents from around the world if we had not been so uniquely endowed with riches? Certainly those who came because the streets were said to be paved with gold would not have come. But the streets were not said to be paved with gold when the idealists fought to make this a free nation, or when Lafayette came to give of himself. They were enthralled with a daring new idea that became a living symbol, the last resort of a decaying world.

In recent decades, the United States, the nation of the world’s poor, has often been the provider for the nations of the old aristocracies. It has set many examples for the Old World to follow, good and bad. At least in recent years, it would appear that a nation such as Sweden under Olof Palme has followed our founding principles often better than we have, at home and in its foreign policy. America has produced many sons and daughters who have fiercely imbibed the spirit of the American Experiment and become, whether known or unknown, true nobility in the real sense. The U.S. has faced some provocative behavior from others. It has faced grave crisis within, unique problems as the trendsetter among capitalist societies, continued despite those challenges to become a melting pot of all races, castes and creeds. And usually, when the facts have been *known* to them, the American people have been for truth and justice and compassion, towards all.

But what of new heights in civilized thought? What of an intelligentsia to guide national thought towards the objectives of the American Experiment?

“We need seek no other reasons for the absence of great writers in America so far: literary genius cannot exist without freedom of spirit, and there is no freedom of spirit in America” wrote de Tocqueville “The majority hold such absolute sway that one must in a sense renounce one’s right as a citizen, and so to say, one’s status as a man



when one wants to divert from the path it [the majority] has marked out ... I saw very few men who showed virile candor and manly independence of thought ... at first glance one might suppose that all American minds have been fashioned after the same model, so exactly do they follow along the same path".

De Tocqueville visited America in 1831-32, when the independent thinkers who founded the new nation had died. He was not questioning conformity to the founding principles as the "same mold" but that of the views and practices of everyday life. Even if his observation was accurate, that tendency towards strict conformity in those early years is quite understandable. The U.S. was still a nation of poor transplants with little education ("Primary education is available to all; higher education is hardly available to anybody" he says); the people were uncertain, needed the security of standard thinking and behavior directions, the "same path", the "same mold". Having gambled and made the hazardous journey to the New World, they were anxious always also to be reassured of their decision, with flattery; for this reason, even constructive criticism touched a raw nerve, which de Tocqueville seems to have found so irksome. "Nothing is more annoying ... than this irritating patriotism of America. A foreigner will gladly agree to praise much in this country, but he would like to be allowed to criticize something and that is absolutely refused. So America is a land of freedom where, in order not to offend anybody, the foreigner must speak neither about individuals nor about the state."

The emerging press lords were already using this public sensitivity to the full. Obviously it was in their interest, to further the materialistic code if other viewpoints were damned before they could be understood. "In America, three-quarters of the bulky newspaper put before you will be full of advertisements" he says and elsewhere "The hallmark of the American journalist is a violent, direct and coarse attack without any subtleties on the passions of the readers".

Over subsequent decades, during which the press lords carved out empires, and the smaller — usually more responsible units — were vanquished, responsible reporting did emerge from time to time. But clearly, the formula for big, continuing profits was to mold public opinion, to glorify materialism and Big Business as the American Dream; that not only satisfied advertisers and the press lords' own objectives, but it reassured and pleased the fortune-hungry amongst the old and new immigrants. Molding opinions on political and social issues was even easier among the new Haves (and ambitious Have-nots), by showing how the Best People thought and lived. "People like to be told what to think" said the astute Eugene Meyer, (according to Tom Kelly in *The Imperial Post*) who bought the floundering *Washington Post* at the turn of the 20th century and made it a success.

Should the "free press" tell the people what to think, or should it present facts, enlighten, keep the original founding principles in the public eye, editorialize *separately*, not in news items or in the *selection* of important news, and then let the people use their own minds? It is easier said than done, of course. With fortunes available to the press lords in that wild era, such altruism, even if practicable, would have required the morals of a saint.

In the electronic age, especially as regards television, the issue is much more clearcut. The lethal power of television on the human mind, its intrinsic ability to persuade, should have been carefully studied, its great value as an educative as well as an entertainment force quickly sought for a great leap towards the completion of the American revolution. Instead it was handed over to a few tradesmen, to the simplistic calls of "free enterprise" from which have evolved multimedia empires which make a

mockery of freedom of expression, of opposing views. American homes watch TV up to nearly seven hours a day, a child 20,000 hours by the time he/she is twenty, more time than any activity, including school. We have perhaps the largest number of high school graduates, but 13% of them are functionally illiterate; overall functional illiteracy is reported to be about 23%, even as drastic cuts are made in the Federal education budget. Schools of Business thrive, Humanities are close to extinction, teachers the lowest among the low.

Even the tendency towards conformity could have been productively used with television's immense power. Instead we are now in an era in which individuality is almost extinct, with the Power Cartel having molded the interior and exterior American virtually into a strait jacket of its own design. We have made great strides technologically, most recently with the remarkable new breakthroughs in the computer. But is it not significant that even as we become more enthralled with it, we are slowly becoming conditioned to accept that its "brain" is always superior, that it may even produce superior art and music? We may even soon be willing to believe that no original thought is possible unless the computer accepts it. The straight jacket will then be all-embracing.

The U.S. has had great writers and other artists since de Tocqueville's time, though many have had to go to Europe to develop their talents. But is it not surprising that today, by far the most successful (in sales) have been those whose stories glamorize business empire builders and their women or men (the Best People), the soap operas in print, Wild West fairy tales, or new excesses in fiction (often made to seem like non-fiction) in the never-ending Cold War? Perhaps the day is not far ahead when a computer, programmed with elements of past best-sellers, will write the best-seller of all times. Perhaps one of the Power Cartel's publishers (and there are not many left who are not owned or fears its influence) has one in the works.

And what we do today, the rest of the world usually does tomorrow. Like it or not, therefore, the plain truth is that ignoring the warnings of early critics we now live under the Power Cartel in the Age of Mediocrity, when cunning and chicanery are "smart", always more respected than "dumb" intelligence; to be principled is to be naive; a time when intellectuals are always suspect and the successful are those who use rabble-rousing tactics; when talent must prostitute itself or die; when everything has to be reduced to be accepted by the lowest common denominator; when truth is merely what the world of illusion makes acceptable; when money is the measure of all things and the drumbeat of democratic freedoms is invoked by exploiters, once the Have-nots, to take charge and use lethal mind control methods to become more tyrannical even than many of the aristocracies of old, and with *less justification*.

And it has all been done in the name of "conservative" values. The Power Cartel has taken de Tocqueville's "ruins of the old buildings", slapped dollar bills to fill the gaping, teetering structure and installed itself as the new landlord. It has changed the tenancy laws a little, and allows some others to enter. Now money (no matter how acquired) is an instant qualification. And class distinction by the accident of birth is *not* obscene, as long as that distinction is based upon acceptable political alignment, bank balance and pigmentation, not family lineage.

Is this what a Democracy must become as de Tocqueville seems to suggest? The founders of the American Republic did not think so. The closer one looks, the more inspiring their vision proves to be.

"Whatever one does, it is impossible to raise the standard of enlightenment in a nation above a certain level" claimed de Tocqueville. But Jefferson and some of the



early intellectuals did not think so. In laying the foundations of the new society, they clearly aimed to write a new chapter in world history, to disprove the old prejudices against the proletariat, to create a society without class distinction, yet one which would reach new heights in civilized living. Exploiters had to be firmly controlled in the free society. "Ceaseless vigilance is the price of liberty" said Jefferson "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free... it expects what never was and never will be". He devoted his life to public education and was a prime mover for a responsible free press, (not the kind that took shape even in his lifetime) to keep the people informed.

In the 1820 edition of Mather's "*Magnalia Christi Americana*", Connecticut Governor Winthrop's warning against misuse of freedom is yet another reminder of the founders' concerns: "There is a liberty of corrupt nature, which is affected by man and beast to do what they list, and this liberty is inconsistent with authority, impatient of all restraint ... Sumus Omnes Deteriores, 'tis the grand enemy of truth and peace, and all the ordinances of God are bent against it".

In his own lifetime, Thomas Jefferson saw the "free press" become the instrument of exploitation; political and commercial corruption also took root; the "scrips" scandal of 1791 with corruption "in high places" was to be the first of many. "The generation that commences a revolution seldom completes it" he wrote to John Adams in 1823, shortly before they both died the same day, just a few years before de Tocqueville made his eight-month journey to study America.

Jefferson's last message to the world appeared in *The National Intelligentsia*, the day he died, July 4, 1826: "All eyes are opening to the Rights of Man. The general spread of the light of science has already laid open to every view the palpable truth that the mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their backs, nor a favored few booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately, by the Grace of God".

"Europe has grown old with folly, corruption and tyranny ... for America to adopt the present maxims of the Old World would be to stamp the wrinkles of decrepit age upon the bloom of youth" said Noah Webster. Joel Barlow crystallized such views in *The Olympiad* (1807); "This is a moment to give such a direction to poetry, printing and other fine arts, that true and useful ideas of glory may be implanted in the minds of men here, to take the place of the base and destructive ones that have degraded the species in other countries". Such visions were soon buried however when the new Republic became inflamed in the stampede for riches "beyond the dream of avarice".

Ironically, in the twentieth century, "decrepit" Europe would periodically take a hard look at its own systems, and imbibe some fresh ideas, even as wealthy Americans continued their yearning for Europe's "follies" and its "wrinkles".

Of course allowance should be made for the fact that sudden affluence and the opportunity to strike it rich, after a lifetime in extreme poverty and degradation, can be intoxicating for anybody. For a while. Excessive greed, even lawlessness may become uncontrollable. For a while. The public went wayward in that first century of mass immigration and the stampede for the land's great riches. That has happened at times to people elsewhere. But that intoxication has now been made permanent, the craving for riches made into the sole reason for being, the American Dream, no less, by the super salesmanship of the press lords, the monopolists and their politicians, and then by the super-hype in the world of illusion of radio, movies and television.

What, in the meanwhile, of the *real* American Dream? Many across the nation, famous and unknown, in each succeeding generation, have attempted to cling to it, to steer the nation back to it, through one or more issues. Many of them were and are of



the Haves. Some presidents (such as Lincoln, Wilson, FDR, Kennedy, Carter) have sought to recommence the path towards the founding aspirations, only to be tarred and feathered, in one way or another, for this violation of the more tempting interpolations of the new creed called Manifest Destiny.

Monstrous though the idea may seem in this era of great wealth, extravagant lifestyles and snobbery, fiercely irritating though it may be, the times require the question to be asked: Have we truly eradicated the negative aspects of the old proletariat mentality to which the huddled masses who came to these shores were inextricably tied for so many generations? Or have we, and now the public of other countries, been re-sold the same traits seductively packaged? The single-minded, lifelong, thirst for riches, of Americans in the past was dictated by necessity, a lifetime in the struggle to survive and, for those among them who "made it", the thirst for more from recollections of past agonies. Their unquestioned homage towards the powerful was then dictated by fear and habit, their reverence for the fineries of extravagant living, the natural result of their own miserable drudgeries. Even their admiration for those who succeeded through cunning, lawlessness or general moral turpitude was usually dictated by their suppressed anger at an unjust and tyrannical system in the Old World. Their "fear of the unknown", their racial and nationality prejudices were the result of ignorance in a world in which communication other than through personal experience or the teaching of the press lords was almost non-existent.

What is our excuse today?

In an era when the U.S. President seeks inspiration for policy decisions from Hollywood scripts and their characters, from Wild West outlaws to Star Wars to Rambo, it is perhaps most fitting to illustrate the point via the Shavian characters in *My Fair Lady*. Eliza Doolittle is a lady in the true sense much *before* she learns to speak and behave like one, because she knows that the difference lies beyond external fineries. Her father, however, convinced that money made by any means, rich raiments, and contempt for the poor are all that one needs to be a "toff", will never be one, just as many born of ancient lineage were not and are not "toffs". Many Americans, living in hovels, have known the difference. Many others, living in pseudo-castles, have not. But it is the latter who have been made legends of the America Dream, for all to admire and emulate in this TV age.

Our total enslavement by the Power Cartel is the cause, but in the final analysis, it is the people who must take the blame in a democracy. The power and onslaught of Power Cartel media has been overwhelming, with its highly skilled technique to delve into the innermost recesses of the public mind and exploit fully the vestiges of feudal weaknesses. No public, anywhere, could have withstood the onslaught any better than the American public. In fact, the Power Cartel media policy, as yet relatively weaker in some other countries, has succeeded in enslaving the public even faster than the U.S. public has been.

And yet, no matter how overwhelming the brainwash, no matter how insidious the tools to enslave the mind and make a mockery of individual freedom, the institutions for recourse in a democracy were and still are available to us, legal recourse which feudal systems did not provide. However difficult it may be to struggle out into independent thinking and use those democratic rights, what alternative is there today for reform?

It needs perhaps to be reiterated: Money is important as a means to an end and therefore it is important to acquire but not as the sole objective to life; the right to

prosper in business is important, a flourishing economy is vital. Television can be used to great, good purpose despite its Power Cartel ties even in our times; it *has* been used to good purpose on occasion even if the ultimate aim may have been to win credibility. There is nothing inherently dangerous about pure TV entertainment. Indeed in an age of unending international tensions and strife, the imminent dangers of nuclear holocaust, the anxieties that our lifestyles make so commonplace, fun for the sake of fun, in any form, is almost essential for survival. It is the insidious use of entertainment and news media as a subtle vehicle for propaganda that is part of the cancer of our times. There are undoubtedly men and women of goodwill and sincerity in commercial TV today, as in any pursuit. The problem is that as employees of those vast empires, their primary career interests must be at odds, all too often, with the primary interests of the people and the nation.

Where would American society have reached by now, and through our influence, world society, had we firmly resolved to adhere to the founding principles even as late as the twentieth century?

We would still be the richest country in the world, probably much richer, with a solid economy and no poor, no illiterates. In fact, the poorest in the U.S. would have income levels above what we call middle income today. And even the poorest countries would have no hungry, by now, probably no poor at all by any of our current definitions.

Farfetched? A meaningless dream? It is repetitious, but because Power Cartel brainwash is so deeply ingrained in us, it is necessary to recap, in broad outline, the simple alternatives that have been available to us.

Commercial multimedia empires would never have been formed, to make us into living robots. A proper tax structure (penalizing excessive profiteering) would have been introduced long ago, providing incentives for business but sharply discouraging business from monopolistic empire-building tendencies, that strangle competition through sheer size and political influences, become gross, unwieldy, that corrupt politicians and look upon foreign lands as territory to exploit with the aid of corrupt politicians. Instead we would have had many more small, medium and large companies, competing through excellence for the market, striving not through extravagant image-making, but always through better quality and value. Advertising would not be beyond the means of even most large companies as it is today, with its ridiculously high rates. And advertising would consist of informing the public, its creativity challenged to honestly communicate its message so that it registers best. "Intent to deceive" would be *truly* illegal, with real awareness of the destructive ripple effect such marketing activities create upon the psyche of the public.

The enormous power of television as a medium would have been examined and understood from the start as something unparalleled in human experience, its great values and dangers recognized. It would never have been handed over to a few tradesmen to use for their own profits and for the objectives of their political affiliates, to create a "success" formula that has become a tradition for all commercial and cable TV businesses to follow, the world over.

Our foreign policy would have encouraged trade but never with neo-colonial designs. "I know but one code of morality or men, whether acting singly or collectively" said Thomas Jefferson. And George Washington's warning would have always been remembered: "The nation that indulges towards another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degrees a slave ... A passionate attachment ... produces a variety of evils ... and it gives to ambitious, corrupt and deluded



citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation) facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity, gilding with the appearance of a virtuous sense of obligation”.

Think a little. How high would America's prestige and respect be around the world if it had truly practiced such a policy, at all times? Our foreign trade would have been far greater, our quality (stripped of chauvinistic complacency), would have always stood up to any competition; the poorer countries, always thrilled with America's founding principles, if truly aided in their development and not exploited, would have remained our most ardent political supporters in international matters. Does their being colonized by American business empires help the American economy? We have seen earlier that it does not.

Would we have ever had the unending horrors in the Middle East if we had stayed with our founding principles? Would we have had our many adventures in Latin America, ostensibly in support of the Monroe Doctrine, but in fact under the neo-colonial banner of Manifest Destiny?

Above all, communism would never have become an alternative, probably even in Russia. Democracy is vastly superior to communism. In fact, even if Lenin had succeeded in enforcing his brand of communism on the Russian people (and that, we must remember, was indirectly *aided* by the West in its attempts to re-establish the Czar on the throne), how long would the Russian people have tolerated its fierce regimen when the glowing example of American democracy would have been available as the alternative?

It is of course all too easy to speculate with hindsight, but would we have had our several economic crises, especially the Great Depression, if society had not been goaded with greed and illusions to believe that we had the Midas touch? If there had to be a World War I from a quarrel between ruling families, would we have allowed the colonial extremism through the “mandates” that were shrewn from that War? It may be very hard to accept today, but did our internal politics and some of our media in the 1920s aid Hitler's popularity among the German people? Suppose we had aided the Spanish people and their elected government against Franco and his Phalangists, and checked Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia, could the Fascists have dared to feel that powerful elements in the West were in sympathy with their designs and run rampant over Europe?

With post World War II, there should be no doubts at all. There would never have been neo-colonialism; even if communism was not already dead, McCarthy witch-hunts, the Korean War, particularly the Vietnam mess did nothing to contain communism or to “make the world safe for democracy” but they did destroy talent, spread terror, death, devastation and tarnish the American image.

We would never have gone insane with a military buildup, nor been hellbent on new nuclear weapons. We would, if the times demanded it, have maintained an adequate military force as a deterrent, but nothing more. We would never have allowed exploiters to take over the reins of government and our minds through media; we would have a track record so just and fair in foreign policy (the Jeffersonian and Washingtonian principles) that whatever agitation that fascist or communist-inspired elements, (if indeed communism has survived at all) might create in the newly freed nations would never have served any purpose.

No doubt, occasionally, we might have faced jealousy, even opposition from corrupt leaders elsewhere who would see our influence as a threat to their malpractices. But how could they have stood up to us, knowing that their own people



and world opinion were with us? Our media and wire services would not have been empires, but many independent entities, no less skilled and with as much worldwide penetration as today if not more, not policy-bound to distort and ridicule others, but to be fair communicators. They would not be into any machiavellian propaganda for any Power Cartel, but more in competition to create a track record of truth in journalism at all times, not *selectively*. They would have true credibility everywhere. The United Nations itself would be our best platform, our view point always respected without threats and armtwisting, because we would be known to stand for the best interests of the human race, always, not just our own or of a "we" group.

Can we truly appreciate how much money we could have saved from a strictly controlled military budget? Considering what the dollar bought in the past, it could be the equivalent of several trillions of dollars, in goods and services today, even though the military budgets were miniscule compared to the insanity of today's allocations.

It is in the nature of human weakness to seek the easy way out by making demigods of religious and political leaders of great substance, to compensate for not following their teachings. We would never have made such demigods of the founders, but accepted them as humans — warts and all — to be truly admired and emulated, reserving our patriotic fervor to implement their vision. Certainly we would never have been so keen to make glamorous royalty out of some of our recent leaders. But then, top leaders would have been elected on their qualifications, intelligence, proven integrity, their true commitment to the founding principles, not media hype, not their rabble-rousing rhetoric or the hundreds of millions of dollars their Special Interest sponsors could spend to create illusions and imagery. The task of top leaders would be to concentrate on programs such as education, health, research, and well-being of the people, the growth and the implementation of the *real* American Dream at home and abroad.

We are conditioned to feel that it is "sophisticated" to accept political corruption as inevitable, that it has always existed everywhere. But then, so has murder and so has rape. Is it sophisticated to accept them and leave it at that? If we set out minds to it, we could so easily reduce if not eradicate political corruption as we *almost* decided to do after Watergate. We could, for instance, so easily reduce the illusory glamor and the inordinate power vested in top political offices, to make them less attractive to exploitative politicians. It is the spirit of the constitution that is sacred, not each word, which can be twisted out of context as it has been ("the right to bear arms"), or outmoded and misused (presidential powers, appointment of non-elected Cabinet, lifetime Supreme Court justices). "Let us build into the Constitution provisions to change it from time to time" said the farsighted Jefferson. And the founders did.

Conceptually, the U.S. was destined to remove the sweet, warm seductive cancer of "We-They" extremism that the world has held so dear through the centuries. The nation was founded on the belief of equality of opportunity for all, has become the home of every class, creed and color from around the globe.

The "We-They" cult had been entrenched in human beings since the time that ancient tribal chiefs had used it to promote unity within their respective tribes, soothe the ego of the lowest, inspire zeal in battles. There is, even today, need for group feelings and identity, within families, friends and when healthy team spirit is necessary. Also, on a national level, when morale is really low or at other periods of national crisis. But the U.S. could have shown the world how the cult's primitive, fanatical use of hate or disdain towards others, and self-glorification had done so much

harm to the human species throughout history, that while we may be stuck with the systems of tribal lands now called countries, and must respect the lands and legitimate government of each tribeland, there is nothing sacred or evil about one land and its people over another where "chance not choice has placed them" (as Jefferson wrote). Truth and justice are paramount, not chauvinism, and cosmopolitan America should have proclaimed it by word and deed consistently.

From time to time, many Americans have been moved by past injustices to the American Indians, the blacks and other minorities. Of course there are grave challenges in it but if we had really decided on it as a national objective, they would by now have been entirely in the mainstream, with proper educational aid and opportunities. The economy would have benefited greatly from this investment, making them productive citizens with buying power. Those hurried and blundering efforts of the Sixties through guilt and fear of the riots were no doubt well-meant, but they invited misuse and exploitation. And reneging on Indian treaties, as we are tempted to do even today, is hardly a compassionate or even a constructive resolution of past misdeeds.

In this Op-Con era, we have swung instead to wonderful rationales to justify the "me-first" attitude, even the conviction, courtesy of media and Op-Con politicians, that we tried what the "bleeding hearts" wanted and it did not work. With this brutal form of self-deception, our collective conscience is presumably eased to return to the "We-They" cult at home and abroad more strongly now than perhaps in any other country, and in doing so, cause other countries to become through the ripple effect more chauvinistic as well. At home, we worship at the subsidiary altars of the cult in hyphenated-Americanism more than ever with racial, geographical and religious distinctions. We have powerful rationales for hyphenated-Americanism, such as looking after one's own kind, preserving cultures, colorful ethnic diversity. No doubt there is some validity to the claim, but we should remember that white South Africa provided similar explanations for introducing apartheid. "Some Americans need hyphens in their name because only a part of them have come over" said President Wilson. But that was seventy years ago. Today, strategists for politicians and commercial media know that in the great hype of our material age, those on the lowest rungs of the economic ladder suffer double traumas; one, in not being able to satisfy the wants they are constantly pressured to desire, and two, from the social ignominy of being poor in an era when money is the measure of all things. For those of the right skin color and ethnicity among us, the subsidiary altars of ethnic, racial, religious, even regional superiority are great ego balms, national jingoism the supreme orgiastic experience. And vote-getter.

Look deep within. What role has commercial media's news reporting and entertainment played in our fiery emotional conviction that "we" are the greatest? That conceit, even snobbery of a kind, is good and right because we share it with a group or sub-group? That living in reflected glory, taking great pride and satisfaction in seeing giant American conglomerates rule us and the world is a fervent Salute to the Flag?

In a real sense, is this not servile, proletarian, more suited to feudalism and totalitarianism than a democracy?

It could be argued, correctly, that the strong "we" feeling serves a useful purpose at times of national stress, disunity, and — for the poorer countries in particular — when morale is low. But there is a difference between its rationale use and overindulgence, for them and for us. As the World's Last Hope, we should be more



committed to dealing with the world with *our* "bloom", not *its* "wrinkles".

But the rationales for chauvinism serve media's commercial ends perfectly and so we are reduced today to blind fury against any country which, rightly or wrongly, is defiant. We, the "new aristocrat" among nations, demand "respect" because we could so easily reduce a tiny country to ashes; it is an affront to our status as world leader to have some little "they" shriek about past injustices, talk of first causes, origins of problems. So our injured pride finds great satisfaction in Mr. Reagan's rhetoric and his speechwriters move from strength to strength. Most recently (June 1985), Mr. Reagan condemned "outlaw states run by the strangest collection of misfits, Looney Tunes and squalid criminals since the advent of the Third Reich", to which Fidel Castro responded by calling Reagan "a madman, an imbecile, a bum". So what next? Nuke Cuba? Not too practical, as radiation alone could destroy at least our East Coast. But we do know that some recent administrations have considered Pushing The Red Button even if they may later deny they did. Even Kissinger has now revealed that in moments of emotional stress, Richard Nixon considered it not once, but four times. And that was when we were still in that fleeting make-love-not-war mood.

Group-narcissism, complacency, stagnation, decline. That has been what might be called the classic syndrome for great empires of the past in their deadly embrace of chauvinism. With our founding commitment to avoid the errors of the Old World, we should have been most aware of this danger, especially with the heady intoxication of sudden rise to the top. With its pioneering spirit, its wealth, its technological skills, and with that no-nonsense application that is so characteristic of America, where would we be today if we had left such Old World cancers behind and concentrated on creating that ideal society that the founders envisioned? With good education, medical care and enough earning for even the poorest to obtain material comfort, we would only have *begun* to lay the framework of a new definition to civilized living. With genuine commitment to research into all aspects of human endeavour, what new *real* breakthroughs would we have had by now in medicine, in artistic expression, in all the sciences? If space exploration had been shared with other lands, perhaps under the aegis of the United Nations, what new realms of knowledge and perspective would we already have discovered, at a fraction of the cost?

The real American Dream would then have started to take shape. Billionaires and those living an extravagant lifestyle would not become tastemakers for the masses merely because they are wealthy. Freed of their lifelong drudgeries to survive, the public would develop those personal traits and inclinations which today cause merely lifelong frustrations in their repression. The less monied would be too involved actively in the art of living, instead of being mere spectators, living vicariously each day through the TV screen, envying those who spend all their lives accumulating more money than they or their children will ever need. We would soon even feel sorry for those so obsessed. There would be no Power Cartel media insisting that the masses yearn to imitate the greedy. No doubt some would remain obsessed, despite the tax laws. But for most, money-greed would have lost much of its appeal because such greed *requires* that the masses be envious, admiring, longing for what one has.

There would undoubtedly be a temporary void in the lives of many totally dependent for their ego on the crutches of the "We-They" cult. But even these seemingly lesser talented would realize that ego-boosters that required others to be hated or to be poorer and subservient for these lesser-talented to enjoy life, cannot be the right values for civilized living, that fair competition is healthy, but repression of others by all means available is barbaric.



There would be that initial period of a purgatory on earth, facing reality, the "awful" truth: that in this perpetual mystery of life on earth, each one of us is born alone and we die alone. Those years of life between must be used fully by each individual as an entity, but also as part of society, living by the collective norms, no doubt influenced by them, yet an individual, expanding the positive qualities in each of us to their optimum during the life span, not dictated merely by career benefits, not merely with a rubber stamp mentality, not just a part of a herd reflecting mass attitudes and behavior at the dictates of Big Brother.

In such a milieu we might even learn to use more than the 10% of our brain which scientists say is all most of us human beings do. We would then know that mediocrity must constantly attempt to improve itself, not force talent and intelligence into harness in the name of equality, that democracy does not mean dropping the standards of society to the level of the lowest common denominator. There would be no exploitative politician and domineering commercial media empires insisting that it be so.

Retirement from work would not carry the present horror of having "nothing" to do. We would work and enjoy life, so that when we die we would not feel that we have lived in vain. We would be free of the guilt that excessive materialistic greed in a society brings so often, the need to exploit, even kill masses of other human beings through our predatory obsessions. We would seek knowledge because it is knowledge, not just "to get a better job", cultural pursuits for that inner satisfaction, not for any status symbol. In such a milieu, enduring values, integrity, love of truth and justice would flow without effort. "Peace on earth" would always be a way of life, not a cliché in a politician's speech, or to drink toasts by, once a year.

We would then have created a society so advanced and civilized that the old feudal myth about the innate superiority of the aristocracy would have been long laid to rest forever. And, long ago, the world would have learnt from our example and created equally civilized societies respecting us far more than ever before as the pioneers, without our incessant incantations that we are the best.

"The generation that commences a revolution seldom completes it" wrote Thomas Jefferson to John Adams in 1823. What did he mean? Think about it. The Revolutionary War had been won in 1783. After they retired, the two men corresponded often, recalling their successes, worrying about what still needed to be done.

With the "We-They" cult and its cancer as deeply ingrained as it is today among people the world over, society based upon human values of the type we have just considered is almost impossible now. Only the worst calamity, a nuclear holocaust that destroys most of the human race, or even an impending attack from outer space could ever force us to lacerate the "We-They" cancer from our system. To most people today, such dreams would be meaningless, naïve. Many would consider society based upon such values as not capricious enough, not spicy enough. Certainly machiavellian politicians, strategists, media commentators of today would find it abhorrent, if not at least mildly subversive. And with good reason. In such a society, they would be where they belong. In oblivion.

We do carry idealism even today in the hearts of some; at least occasionally, we have intermittently shown traits of those founding principles in our ways as a nation. But that nationwide yearning for a rethink, a moratorium, that little flutter for real change which occurred only a few years ago, is now clearly buried.

The national economy, that standard barometer of presidential popularity, is being gambled with, as never before in American history. The Administration and its

media supporters emphasize optimism. The stark figures tell their own story: as of mid 1985, the Federal Government debt is \$1.65 trillion. Corporate Debt (growing furiously with giant take-overs and mergers) is \$1.4 trillion, Consumer Debt (credit purchases) is \$2.25 trillion. Total debt is therefore approximately \$5.15 trillion (\$5,150,000,000,000). Last year, 79 banks failed. The real impact of the Reagan years, in so many ways, will last for many years to come.

The mood of excessive greed has led the U.S. to grave financial crisis before, periodically, over the past two hundred years. The most serious was the Great Depression from which the FDR reforms and World War 2 were needed to bounce back. The current insistence that confidence and optimism will expand the economy (aided by the astronomical defense spendings) may boost the economy for a while, but the suffocating deficit needs just one serious nudge for a major disaster, which will make itself felt all around the world. The collapse of the Ohio banks in 1984 almost created such a ripple.

Whatever they may say publicly, the Reagan administration strategists know how serious the situation really is. Will they see a major war as the best solution, perhaps a "limited nuclear" War? The Op-Cons have worked assiduously to finally seize power and full control of the public mind. They will never give up that power even if it means taking a dangerous gamble. The Russians, especially in the face of our galloping defense spendings, have not been standing idly by. Even if they are still considerably less powerful than us militarily, they must know that they have enough of just the 50,000 nuclear warheads the two superpowers have had for years to inflict a mortal wound. After all, how often does each human being on earth need to be killed? Stirred by the same "We-They" cancer, they too must reach a stage of feeling that their pride cannot take any more humiliations. And while there are those in the U.S. committed to peace, it is significant that war toys for children, so unpopular just a few years ago have climbed 350% since 1982, to a record \$842 million in annual sales. And *Rambo* reigns at box offices.

Mr. Reagan's current illhealth poses even greater danger for the U.S. Should he die before he completes his second term, he will be canonized by the public, the peculiar views he voices will be carved in sacred memory in millions of hearts for years to come, and will therefore be echoed by ambitious candidates of the future.

Though chances of real reform are now extremely bleak, a dramatic shift in the right direction may still be possible, if Mr. Reagan, with his grave personal health crisis, could see the light and overcome the brainwash that he has been subjected to, *perhaps even more than the general public*, and truly use his immense popularity and presidential powers constructively. It would require a complete about-turn, but it would be the manly and God-fearing thing to do.

"If these lines ever come to be read in America, I am sure of two things; first, all readers will raise their voices to condemn me; secondly, that in the depth of their conscience, many will hold me innocent" wrote de Tocqueville. Despite the criticism he voiced, de Tocqueville admired and respected America. He had a simple reason for this: "America is great because it is good".

The Op-Cons would not agree, of course. America is great, they say, because it is rich and powerful and can win, win, win.

And so, Shelley may well have the last word:

"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:  
Look at my works, ye Mighty, and despair!  
Nothing beside remains ..."

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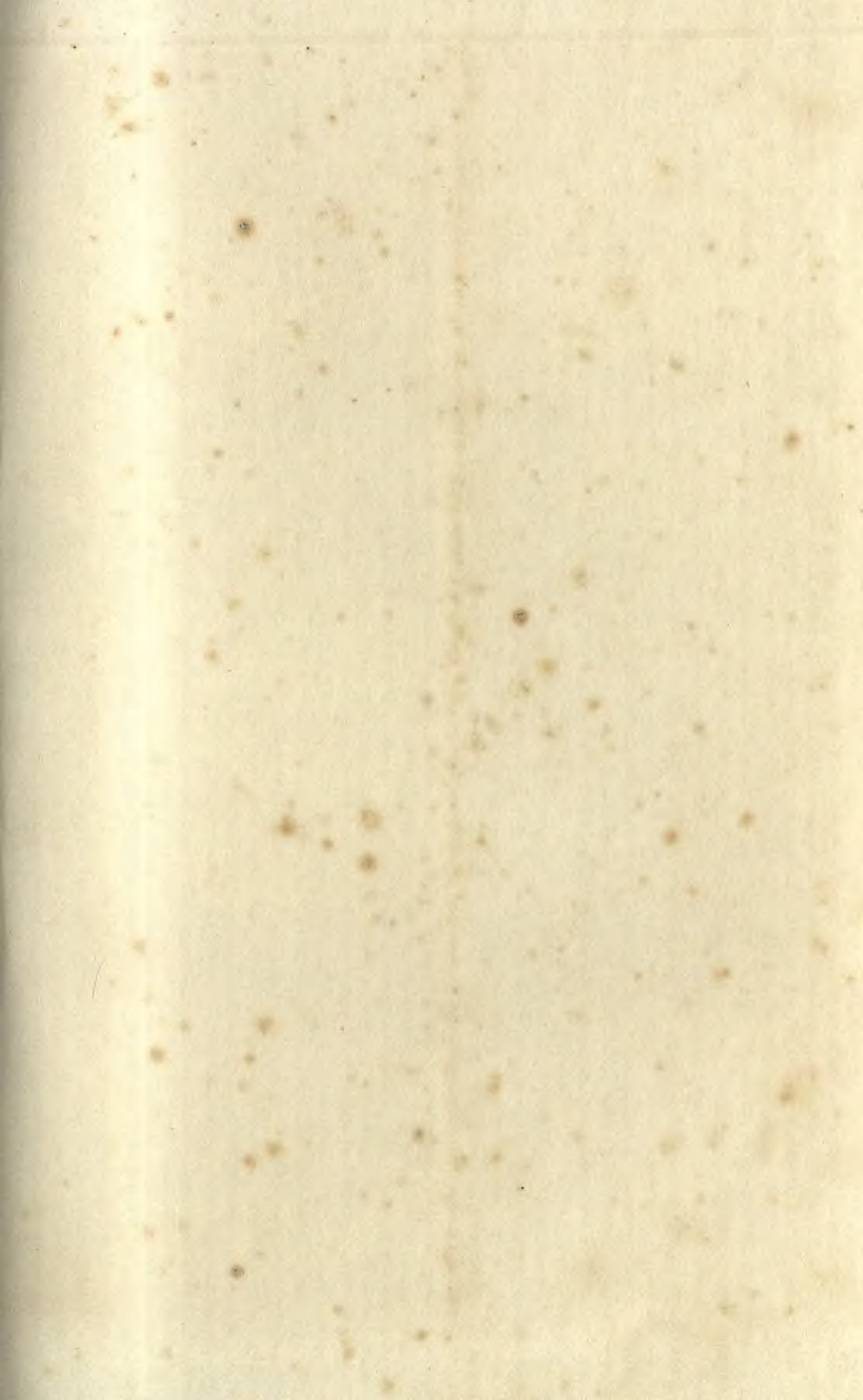
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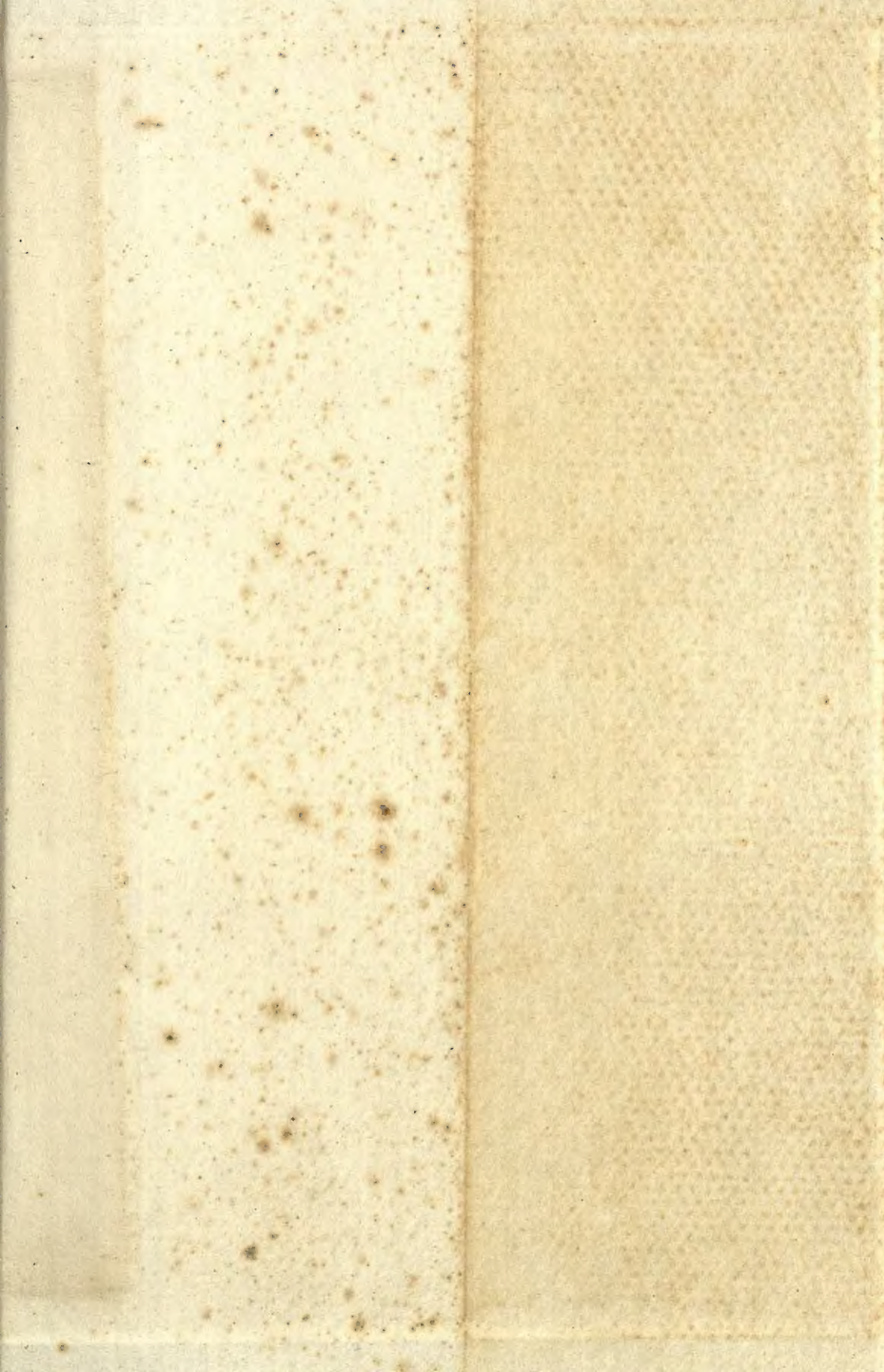














*A blistering account focusing on the Power Cartel who rule the thought-process of Americans today, the Op-Cons (Opportunistic-Conservatives) who govern it and commercial media empires which make it all possible.*